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Notes

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DUNS SCOTUS

on

THE NATURE OF MAN'S KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

*Introduction*

Despite the fact that John Duns Scotus is admittedly one of the great intellectual figures of the Middle Ages, almost nothing of his literary work has appeared in English translation. Farrar and Evans,<sup>1</sup> for instance, could discover nothing beyond the single question published by Richard McKeon in his *Selections from Medieval Philosophers*. A number of factors, no doubt, are responsible for this scarcity of versions in the vernacular. Not the least of these are the technicality of Scotus' language, the profundity of his thought, the obscurity of his style, and, above all, the extremely poor condition of the Latin text in present editions.

Almost a decade ago, the *Scotistic Commission* (now located in Rome) under the direction of Charles Balić, O.F.M., set out to remedy the last named condition with a new critical edition

of the *Opera Omnia Scotti*. Innumerable difficulties and obstacles, however, have delayed the work. Although the first volume is to appear shortly, it will be many years before the complete edition will be available. Fortunately historical research is at such a stage that we are in a position to determine in main outline what works are authentic, dubious or spurious. From present indications, at least, the critical edition is not expected to introduce any radical changes of doctrine, although it will make for a better and clearer reading. Consequently, a translation of some of the more important sections of the works of Scotus based upon the present editions is not without value, and will fill a very definite need until the critical editions and official versions appear. The translation which follows is intended as a step in that direction.

Though taken from Scotus' greatest theological work, the *Oxford Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard*, or as it was called in the Middle Ages, the *Ordinatio Scotti*, the present question is a purely philosophical discussion. Can the human mind by its natural powers, unaided by any revelation, form an idea of God? And if it can, what is the nature of this knowledge?

As to its form, the question is developed in typical scholastic fashion. It opens with a *Pro et Contra*, which is followed by the *corpus* or body of the discussion and concludes with a solution of the arguments in the *Pro et Contra*. In the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries this form underwent certain modifications. For one thing, the *corpus* was greatly enlarged to include a critical exposition of current solutions other than the author's own. In the present Question of Scotus only one such solution is advanced, that of the great secular master at the University of Paris, Henry of Ghent. Another common practice, particularly with Scotus, is to group several related questions about a common *corpus*. The solutions to the arguments of the *Pro et Contra* of the respective questions are then bunched together at the end or, again, they may be inserted in the *corpus* immediately after the discussion of some point pertinent to that particular question. At times a very complicated form results. The present Question, for instance, is joined to a second Question occasioned by the position of Henry:—Is God the primary object known in this life by natural means? Only those sections pertaining to the first

Question, however, have been translated and are presented as a whole.

Scanning the contents briefly, we note that Scotus in his preliminary remarks rejects a number of distinctions of pre-scholastic and scholastic origin that were customarily introduced into a discussion on the nature of our knowledge of God. One, for instance, is the oft-quoted saying of Pseudo-Dionysius that we do not know what God is; we know only what He is not.<sup>2</sup> This *docta ignorantia* was exaggerated by many. Scotus Eriugena, for instance, suggests that perhaps it might be more correct to say that God is not good, true, just and so on, since any term or concept we might derive from the universe of creatures is so radically inadequate to express what He is that it could more truly be denied of God than affirmed of Him.<sup>3</sup> Duns Scotus reminds us that this way of speaking cannot be taken too seriously. If our knowledge is purely negative, it is no knowledge of God at all. Similarly other distinctions are rejected, either because they are not to the point or because they will not stand up beneath the rigor of logical analysis. Such are, for instance, the assertion that we can know that God exists without knowing what He is, or that we know that the proposition, "God exists," is true, but we know nothing of God Himself or of His existence as such.

Scotus develops his positive doctrine from an Aristotelian viewpoint in the form of five propositions or statements. The tenets of Henry of Ghent, still fresh in the minds of Parisian students, provide the Augustinian background of contrast.

Scotus, in his *first proposition*, declares that God is not merely conceived as an hypostatized attribute such as "the Wise," "the Good," "the Just," and so on, as the Ghentian suggests. Our concepts tell us something of what He is. Or to put it in the language of grammar, we describe God not merely with adjectives but also with nouns. Before we can refer to God as "wise," we must know Him as "something" or "someone," as a "being," a "thing," etc. Just as an adjective modifies a noun, so must an attribute or property be conceived as a modification of some subject. And consequently we must have a previous knowledge of the subject itself. Such a concept will be a quidditative notion, since it represents an answer to the question, What is God?

(*Quid est*), and not merely, What *kind* of a being is He? (*Quale est*).

Due to his theory of the analogy of being, Henry made complicated distinctions which, to Scotus, were equivalent to denying the possibility of any true quidditative knowledge of God from the starting point of creatures.

It is this theory of "pure" analogy, which Scotus attacks in his *second proposition*. Though in deference to the weight of authority against him Scotus presents his theory as merely probable, we can hardly doubt that he was convinced of its basic correctness. Apparently he was one of the first, if not the first, to realize what implications an Aristotelian theory of knowledge might have upon the Platonic theory of the analogy of being. To deny the possibility of abstracting a positive notion from creatures that applies univocally to God leaves but two alternatives. Either accept agnosticism or postulate some distinct source of our proper concepts of God such as the innatism of Descartes or the illuminationism of Augustine.<sup>4</sup>

In his *third proposition* Scotus denies that any direct or intuitive knowledge of God's essence is natural to man. His reason is this. God is not a natural object of intuition for any created intellect. Under this aspect He is a purely voluntary object. He does not elaborate on this argument, though he does develop it elsewhere.<sup>5</sup> This argument has several interesting aspects. Not only does it represent an attempt to destroy ontologism at its very root, but it reveals an interesting characteristic of Scotus' whole philosophy of the creature-God relation. Creatures are radically contingent; God is the only necessary being. Between a necessary and contingent being no truly "natural" relationship can arise, that is, one which follows necessarily from the nature of the two related beings. All such relations, being outside and distinct from God, are as radically contingent as created intellect itself. Hence all such relations depend ultimately on the will of a God who creates contingently. For this reason, even granting that God has created a being with intellectual powers, no direct or natural causal relation between His essence as an object of intuition and the created intellect can arise. A voluntary decree on His part is required. For this reason the "beatific vision" essentially exceeds the powers of any natural causes.

Scotus' fourth and fifth principles deal with the nature of our proper concepts of God. Proper concepts are those which apply exclusively to God, such as 'infinite being', 'highest goodness', and the like. In the first of the two, Scotus emphasizes that "infinite" is not a specific difference or an attribute in any true sense of the term. Rather it is an intrinsic mode, expressing something that pertains to the formal character of being as found in God. For "being", "truth", "goodness", and the like, are formally and intrinsically infinite. In creatures, however, such perfections are finite. Yet this radical difference between God and creatures does not prevent us from abstracting a common, *imperfect*, concept which prescinds from the intrinsic modes of both God and creature and which is univocally predicable of both. Because "infinity" is intrinsic to all of God's perfections, our concept "infinite being" is simpler than the concept "good being", since, according to Scotus, goodness and being are not formally identical.

His fifth principle explains how proper notions of God are formed. Presupposing a theory of univocation, Scotus indicates how such univocal elements as "cause", "being", "good", "act", and so on, can be used as so many *tesserae* to form a mosaic picture of God. The imperfections of creatures may also be negated, and thus we can form a concept of a being that is not finite (infinite being). This notion of "infinite" is not the positive notion of Descartes, Bonaventure, and the Augustinian illuminationists in general. These men could admit such a positive notion of infinity since they had a distinct source of this knowledge. With Scotus, however, all knowledge must be abstracted through the senses, and this theory of knowledge automatically commits him to accept a negative concept of God's most positive perfection.

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## LATIN TEXT<sup>1</sup>

### DOCTORIS SUBTILIS AC MARIANI

Super Distinctione III. Libri I. Sententiarum

#### QUAESTIO I

Circa tertiam distinctionem quaero primo de cognoscibilitate Dei. Et quaero primo: Utrum Deus sit naturaliter *cognoscibilis ab intellectu viatoris?*

Arguo quod non.—*a) Philosophus, III. De Anima: Phantasmata se habent ad intellectum sicut sensibilia ad sensum;* igitur intellectus nihil intelligit nisi cuius phantasma potest per sensum apprehendere: Deus autem non habet phantasma; ergo, etc.

*b) Item II. Metaph.: Sicut se habet oculus noctuae ad lucem solis, sic intellectus noster ad ea quae sunt manifestissima naturae;* sed ibi est impossibilitas; ergo et hic.

*c) Item, I. Physicorum: infinitum in quantum infinitum est ignotum.*—Et *II. Metaph.: infinita non contingit cognoscere;* ergo nec infinitum; quia eadem videtur esse proportio intellectus ad infinitum et ad infinita, quia aequalis excessus, vel non minor, quia utrobique est infinitas.

*d) Item, Gregor. super Ezechiel: Quantumcumque mens nostra in contemplatione Dei profecerit, non ad illud quod ipse est, sed ad illud quod sub ipso est attingit.*

Contra: *IX. Metaphysic.: Metaphysica est Theologia de Deo;* ergo etc.—Similiter, in actu eius, scilicet in consideratione actuali substantiarum separatarum ponit Aristoteles felicitatem humanam, *X. Ethic.*

#### Notiones Praeviae

In *prima quaestione* non est distinguendum quod Deus possit cognosci negative, non affirmative; quia negatio non cognoscitur

1. The text is that of the Quaracchi edition, slightly revised.

## *ENGLISH TEXT*

(*Oxoniense*, liber I, d 3, q. 1.)

### CAN GOD BE KNOWN IN THIS LIFE THROUGH NATURAL MEANS?

I argue that He cannot:

*Arg. I.* "Sense images are related to the intellect in the same way that sense objects are related to the senses."<sup>1</sup> Consequently, the intellect is unable to grasp anything whose sense image cannot be known by the senses. But of God there is no sense image; therefore, God can not be known by natural means.

*Arg. II.* "As the eyes of bats are to the blaze of day, so is the reason in our soul to the things which are by nature most evident of all."<sup>2</sup> But if it is impossible to know such things, it is impossible to know God.

*Arg. III* "The infinite as infinite is unknowable."<sup>3</sup> "It is not possible to know things that are infinite [in number]."<sup>4</sup> Therefore, neither can the "Infinite Being" be known, since an infinite number and an Infinite Being would seem to be equally disproportionate to our intellect; for an Infinite Being exceeds the powers of our intellect in the same measure, or certainly to no less a degree, than does the infinite in number, because "infinity" is in both "Infinite Being" and "infinite in number".

*Arg. IV* "No matter how far our mind may have progressed in the contemplation of God, it does not attain to what He is, but to what is beneath Him."<sup>5</sup>

To the contrary:

*Arg. I* "Metaphysics is a theology of God,"<sup>6</sup> therefore, etc.

*Arg. II* Moreover, Aristotle places the happiness of man in the actual possession of such knowledge, that is to say, in the actual speculation about the separate substances.<sup>7</sup>

nisi per affirmationem, *II. Periber.*, in fine, et *IV. Metaph.*—Patet etiam quod nullas negationes cognoscimus de Deo nisi per affirmaciones, per quas removemus incompossibilia aliqua ab illis affirmationibus, sicut non removemus compositionem nisi quia attribuimus simplicitatem vel aliquid aliud.—Negationes etiam tantum non summe amamus.

Similiter etiam, aut negatio concipitur *praecise*, aut ut dicta *de aliquo*.—Si *praecise* concipitur negatio, ut *non lapis*, hoc aequre convenit nihilo sicut Deo, quia pura negatio dicitur *de ente et non ente*; igitur in hoc non intelligitur Deus magis quam nihil vel chimaera.—Si intelligitur non *lapis de aliquo*, tunc quaero, ille conceptus subtractus, de quo intelligitur ista negatio esse vera, aut est conceptus *affirmativus*, aut *negativus*.—Si est *affirmativus*, habetur propositum. Si *negativus*, quaero ut prius: aut negatio concipitur *praecise*, aut ut dicta *de aliquo*. Si primo modo, hoc aequre convenit nihilo sicut Deo. Si ut dicta *de aliquo*, tunc sicut prius.—Et quantumcumque procederetur in negationibus, vel non intelligeretur Deus magis quam nihil, vel stabitur in aliquo conceptu *affirmativo*, qui est primus.

Nec est distinguendum de cognitione *si est et quia est*; quia in proposito quaero *conceptum simplicem*, de quo cognoscatur esse per actum intellectus componentis et dividentis; nunquam enim cognosco de aliquo *si est*, nisi habeam aliquem conceptum illius extremi de quo cognosco esse; et de isto quaeritur hic.

Nec oportet distinguere de *si est*, ut est quaestio de *veritate propositionis*, vel ut est quaestio de *esse Dei*, quia si potest esse quaestio de veritate propositionis, in qua *esse* tamquam praedicatum quaeritur de subiecto, ad concipiendum veritatem illius quaestionis oportet praconcipere terminos illius quaestionis; et de conceptu simplici illius subiecti, si est possibilis naturaliter, nunc est quaestio.

Nec valet distinguere de conceptu *naturali et supernaturali*; quia quaeritur de *naturali*.

Nec valet distinguere de *naturali*, loquendo de *natura absolute*, vel de *natura pro statu isto*; quia quaeritur *praecise* de cognitione *pro statu isto*.

Nec valet distinguere de cognitione *Dei* in *creatura*, vel *in se*, quia si cognitio habeatur per *creaturam*, ita quod cognitio *discursiva* incipiat a *creatura*, quaero in *quo termino sistitur* ista

*Preliminary Observations*

In this first question there is no need to make the distinction that we cannot know what God is; we can know only what He is not.<sup>8</sup> For every denial is intelligible only in terms of some affirmation.<sup>9</sup> It is also clear that we can know negations of God only by means of affirmations; for if we deny anything of God, it is because we wish to do away with something inconsistent with what we have already affirmed. Thus, we deny composition of God only because we have attributed simplicity or something else to Him.

Neither are pure negations the object of our greatest love.

Furthermore, if something is negated, either the negation is considered simply in itself or as predicated of something. If a negation, such as "not stone", is considered simply in itself, it is as characteristic of "nothing" as it is of God, for a pure negation is predicated of both "being" and non-being". Consequently, what we know through such a negation is no more God than it is a chimera or nothing at all. If "not stone" is understood as modifying something, then I ask whether the underlying notion of which the negation is understood to be true is an affirmative or a negative notion. If it is negative, I inquire as I did before. Either the negation is conceived simply in itself or as predicated of something. If the first be true, then the negation applies to "nothing" as well as to God. If it is conceived as predicated of something, then I argue as before. And no matter how far we proceed with negations, either what we know is no more God than "nothing" is, or we will arrive at some affirmative concept which is the first concept of all.

Neither is there any need to distinguish between a knowledge of His existence and a knowledge of His essence, for I intend to seek a simple concept of which existence may be affirmed or denied by a judgment of the intellect.<sup>10</sup> For I never know anything to exist unless I first have some concept of that of which existence is affirmed. And this is what we seek here.

There is no need to distinguish in regard to His existence between the question of the truth of the proposition and the question of the existence of God.<sup>11</sup> For, before there can be any question of the truth of a proposition wherein existence is

cognitio?—Si in Deo *in se*, habeo propositum, quia illum conceptum Dei *in se* quaero.—Si non sistitur in Deo *in se*, sed in creatura, tunc idem erit *terminus et principium discursus*, et ita nulla notitia habetur *de Deo*.

Est igitur mens *quaestioneis* ista: *utrum aliquem conceptum simplicem possit intellectus viatoris naturaliter habere, in quo conceptu simplici concipiatur Deus?*

#### Sententia Henrici Gandavensis

Ad hoc dicit *quidam Doctor* sic: quod loquendo de cognitione alicuius, distingui potest ex parte obiecti *per se* vel *per accidens*, in *particulari* vel in *universali*.

Realiter *per accidens* non cognoscitur Deus, quia quidquid de ipso cognoscitur est ipse Deus; tamen cognoscendo aliquod attributum eius cognoscimus *quasi per accidens* *quid est*; unde de attributis dicit Damasc. lib. I. cap. 4, *quod non naturam dicunt Dei, sed quae circa naturam*.

In *universalis* etiam, puta in generali attributo, cognoscitur, non quidem in *universalis* secundum *praedicationem*, quod dicatur de ipso, in quo nullum est *universale*, quia quidditas illa est *de se singularis*, sed in *universalis* quod sibi *analogice commune* est et creaturae; tamen *quasi unum* a nobis concipitur propter proximitatem conceptuum, licet sint *diversi conceptus*.

In *particulari* non cognoscitur ex creaturis, quia creatura est peregrina similitudo eius, quia tantum ei conformis est quoad aliqua attributa, quae non sunt illa natura in *particulari*; igitur cum nihil ducat in cognitionem alterius nisi sub ratione similitudinis, sequitur quod Deus non cognoscitur in *particulari* ex creaturis.

Item in *universalis* tripliciter cognoscitur: generalissime, generalius, generaliter.

Generalissime habet tres gradus: cognoscendo enim *quodcumque ens ut hoc ens* indistinctissime concipitur Deus, quia concipitur *ens quasi pars conceptus*; et est *primus gradus*.—Amovendo autem hoc, et concipiendo *ens est secundus gradus*; iam enim *ens ut conceptum*, non ut pars conceptus, concipitur commune analogum Deo et creaturae. Quod si distinguatur *conceptus entis*, qui Deo convenit, puta concipiendo *ens indeter-*

predicated of a subject, it is necessary first of all to conceive the terms of this proposition. Now the question is this, Is it possible to have a concept of the subject [of this proposition "God exists"] by natural means?

Neither is there any point in distinguishing between a natural and a supernatural concept, because we are interested here only in the former.<sup>12</sup>

And speaking of the natural, there is no need to distinguish between "nature, absolutely speaking" and "nature, in our present state", for we are interested only in the latter.<sup>13</sup>

Neither is there any point in distinguishing between knowing God in Himself and knowing God in a creature.<sup>14</sup> For if our knowledge comes through a creature in the sense that the reasoning process begins with what can be known from a creature, then I ask, What do we know at the conclusion of this process? If it is God Himself, then I have what I seek, for I am looking for a concept of God Himself. If it is not God, but a creature, then the beginning and conclusion of the reasoning process are identical, and therefore I have no knowledge of God at all.

The meaning of the question then is this: Is it possible by natural means for someone in this present life to have a concept wherein God is conceived?

#### *The Opinion of Henry of Ghent<sup>15</sup>*

A certain teacher answers the question in this way. From the standpoint of the object known, we can distinguish: *a*) a knowledge of a thing through the thing itself, *b*) a knowledge of the thing through something incidental to it, *c*) a knowledge of the thing in particular, and *d*) a knowledge of the thing in general.

1. In reality there is no knowledge of God *through something incidental to Him*, for whatever is known of God, is God Himself. Nevertheless, we do know what God is in a *quasi-incidental* manner when we know some one of His attributes. Hence Damascene<sup>16</sup> says that the attributes "do not bespeak the nature of God, but something about the nature."

2. God is also known *in a general way*, that is, through some universal attribute. Not indeed that any attribute, universal by way of predication, is affirmed of Him in whom nothing is universal, for His essence is singular of its very nature. He is

*minatum negative*, id est *non determinabile*, a conceptu entis, qui convenit creaturae analogice, quod est ens *indeterminatum privative*, iam est *tertius gradus*.—Primo modo indeterminatum abstrahitur, ut forma ab omni materia, ut in se subsistens et imparticipabilis. Secundo modo indeterminatum est universale abstractum a particularibus, quod non est actu participatum in illis.

Post istos tres gradus concipiendi *generalissime*, concipitur Deus *generalius*, concipiendo *quodcumque attributum*, non simpliciter sicut prius, sed *cum praeminentia summa*.

Generaliter autem concipitur concipiendo *quodcumque attributum esse idem suo primo proprio attributo*, scilicet eius *esse*, propter simplicitatem. Nec per speciem propriam cognoscitur Deus, quia nihil est eo simplicius, sed ad modum aestimativa. Sicut enim aestimativa in brutis, sub intentionibus sensatis subfodiendo, cognoscit intentiones non sensatas ut nocivi et proficui, sic intellectus sub specie creaturae, quae non repraesentat nisi creaturam, ex suo acumine subfodit ad cognoscendum ea quae sunt et dicuntur de Deo, per speciem alienam ex creaturis; et hoc omnibus tribus modis praedictis.

#### Doctoris Sententia

*Respondeo aliter ad primam quaestionem*, et in quibusdam contradicam positioni praedictae; rationes enim meae positionis ostendent oppositum illius positionis.

Dico PRIMO, quod non tantum haberi potest conceptus naturaliter in quo *quasi per accidens* concipitur Deus, puta in aliquo *attributo*, sed etiam aliquis conceptus in quo *per se et quidditative* concipiatur Deus.

*Probo*: quia concipiendo *sapientem* concipitur proprietas, secundum eum, vel quasi proprietas in actu secundo perficiens naturam; ergo intelligendo sapientem oportet praеintelligere aliquid *quasi subiectum*, cui intelligo illud *quasi proprietatem* inesse; et ita ante conceptus omnium passionum vel quasi passionum oportet inquirere conceptum aliquem *quidditativum*, cui intelligantur ista attribui; et ille conceptus alias erit *quid-ditativus* de Deo, quia in nullo alio potest esse status.

SECUNDO, non asserendo, quia non consonat opinioni communi,

known, however, in a "universal" that is analogically common to Himself and to a creature. This universal is conceived by us as though it were one notion, because of the close resemblance of the concepts it contains, although the latter in reality are diverse.

3. God is not known *in particular* from creatures, because a creature bears only a foreign likeness to Him, since it resembles Him only in those attributes which do not constitute Him as this particular nature. Now since one thing can be known through another only by reason of the similarity existing between the two, it follows that God is not known in particular through creatures.

Furthermore, there are three ways in which we may have a *general knowledge* of God: *a) in a most general way*, *b) in a less general way*, and *c) in the least general manner*.

*a)* The *most general* knowledge we have of God comprises three stages: (1) to know any being as "this being" is already to conceive God in a very indistinct way; for "being" is included, as it were, as part of the concept. This is the first step. (2) The second step consists in removing the "this" and conceiving simply "being." For "being", in so far as it is a concept and not simply a part of a concept, is already conceived as analogically common to God and creature. (3) We are in the third stage, if the concept of being which pertains to God is distinguished from the concept of being which pertains analogically to creatures; for instance, if God is conceived as a being that is *negatively* undetermined, that is, incapable of being determined, while a creature is conceived as a being that is *privatively* undetermined.<sup>17</sup> In the first instance, "undetermined" is conceived abstractly as something self-subsistent and incapable of being participated, like a form that lacks all matter. In the second, "undetermined" is a universal abstracted from particulars and not actually shared by them.<sup>18</sup>

*b)* In addition to these three stages of most general knowledge, God is grasped in a *less general* and more specific way, when any given attribute is conceived not in an unqualified manner as before, but as existing in the highest degree of perfection possible to such an attribute.

*c)* God is known in the *least general manner*, however, when the mind, on the basis of God's simplicity, identifies any of His

dici potest, quod non tantum in conceptu *analogo* conceptui creaturae concipitur Deus, qui scilicet sit *omnino alius ab illo* qui de creatura dicitur, sed in conceptu aliquo *univoço* sibi et creaturae.

Et ne fiat contentio de nomine *univocationis*, *conceptum univocum* dico qui *ita est unus*, *quod eius unitas sufficit ad contradictionem affirmando et negando ipsum de eodem: sufficit etiam pro medio syllogistico, ut extrema unita in medio sic uno sine fallacia aequivocationis concludantur inter se uniri.*

Et *univocationem* sic intellectam probo *tripliciter*.—Primo sic: Omnis intellectus certus de uno conceptu, et dubius de diversis, habet conceptum de quo est certus, aliud a conceptibus de quibus est dubius: subiectum includit praedicatum: sed intellectus viatoris potest esse certus de Deo, quod sit *ens*, dubitando de ente *finito* vel *infinito*, *creato* vel *increato*; ergo conceptus *entis* de Deo est alius a conceptu isto vel illo, et ita neuter ex se, sed *in utroque illorum includitur*; ergo *univocus*.

*Probatio maioris*: quia nullus idem conceptus est certus et dubius; igitur vel alias, quod est propositum, vel nullus, et tunc non erit certitudo de aliquo conceptu.—*Probo minorem*: quilibet Philosophus fuit certus illud quod posuit esse primum principium esse *ens*, puta unus de *igne*, alias de *aqua*, certus erat quod erat *ens*: non autem fuit certus quod esset *ens creatum* vel *increatuum*, *primum* vel non *primum*; non enim erat certus quod erat *ens primum*, quia tunc fuisset certus de *falso*, et falsum non est scibile; nec quod erat *ens non primum*, quia tunc non posuisset oppositum.

*Confirmatur* etiam ratio: nam aliquis, videns Philosophos discordare, potest esse certus de quocumque eorum quod quilibet posuit primum principium esse *ens*, et tamen propter contrarietatem opinionum eorum potuit simul dubitare utrum sit *hoc ens vel illud*; et tali dubitanti si fieret demonstratio concludens, vel destruens aliquem conceptum inferiorem, puta, quod ignis non erat *ens primum*, sed aliquod *ens posterius primo ente*, non destrueretur ille conceptus *primus sibi certus quem habuit de ente*, sed salvaretur in illo conceptu particulari probato de *igne*.—Et per hoc probatur illa propositio supposita in ultima *consequentia rationis*, quae fuit quod ille conceptus *certus*, qui est ex se neuter dubiorum, *in utroque illorum salvatur*.

other attributes with His primary attribute, namely, *Being* itself.

Since nothing is simpler than God, He is known through a species, not in the proper sense of the term, but in a manner reminiscent of the operation of the estimative power. For just as in brutes, the estimative power, burrowing beneath the data of the senses, knows something not given by the senses, for instance, what is harmful and what is useful, so also the intellect by its acumen digs beneath the intellectual image of a creature, which represents nothing beyond the creature itself, and thus discovers by a species other than that derived from creatures, those things which pertain to and are predicated of God. And this procedure occurs in all three of the aforementioned ways of knowing God.

#### *The Opinion of Duns Scotus*

My answer to the first question is different. It will contradict on certain points the position mentioned above, for the reasons advanced in support of my position will establish the very opposite of the other.

##### *First Statement*

In the first place, I say that it is naturally possible to have not merely a concept in which God is known incidentally, as it were,—for instance, under the aspect of some attribute—but also one in which He is conceived *essentially* and *quidditatively*.

This I prove as follows. According to him [Henry of Ghent], by conceiving "wise" we grasp a property or quasi-property which perfects the nature after the manner of a secondary act. In order to conceive "wise", therefore, it is necessary to have a conception of some prior quasi-subject, in which this quasi-property is understood to exist. And so we must look beyond all our ideas of attributes or quasi-attributes, in order to find some quidditative concept to which the former may be attributed. This other concept will be a quidditative notion of God, for our quest for a quasi-subject will not cease with any other kind of concept.

##### *Second Statement*

Though we do not advance this as a positive declaration, since it is not in accord with the common opinion, it can be said,

Quod si non cures de auctoritate ista accepta ex diversitate opinionum philosophantium, sed dicas quod quilibet habet duos conceptus in intellectu suo propinquos, qui propter propinquitatem *analogiae* videntur esse *unus* conceptus, *contra* hoc videtur esse ratio quia ex ista evasione videretur destructa omnis via probandi *unitatem* alicuius conceptus univocam; si enim dicis *hominem* habere *unum* conceptum ad Sortem et Platonem, negabitur, et dicetur quod sunt duo, sed videntur *unus* propter magnam similitudinem.

*Secundo* principaliter arguo sic: Nullus conceptus realis causatur in intellectu viatoris naturaliter nisi ab his quae sunt naturaliter motiva intellectus nostri: sed illa sunt phantasma vel obiectum relucens in phantasmate, et intellectus agens; ergo nullus conceptus simplex fit modo naturaliter in intellectu nostro nisi qui potest fieri virtute istorum: sed conceptus qui non esset *univocus* alicui obiecto reluenti in phantasmate, sed omnino aliis et prior, ad quem iste haberet *analogiam*, non posset fieri virtute intellectus agentis et phantasmatis, ut probabo; ergo talis conceptus alias analogus, qui ponitur naturaliter in intellectu viatoris, nunquam erit, et ita non poterit naturaliter haberi aliquis conceptus de Deo: quod est falsum.

*Probatio assumpti:* obiectum quocumque, sive relucens in phantasmate, sive in specie intelligibili, cum intellectu agente vel possibili cooperante, secundum ultimum suae virtutis, facit in intellectu, sicut effectum sibi *adaequatum*, conceptum suum proprium et conceptum omnium essentialiter vel virtualiter inclusorum in eo: sed ille alias conceptus qui ponitur *analogus* non est essentialiter vel virtualiter inclusus in isto, nec est iste; ergo ille non fiet ab aliquo tali movente.

Et *confirmatur ratio*, quia praeter conceptum suum proprium adaequatum et inclusa in ipso, altero praedictorum duorum modorum, nihil potest cognosci ex isto obiecto nisi per discursum: sed discursus praesupponit cognitionem istius simplicis ad quod discurretur.—Formetur ergo ratio sic: Nullum obiectum facit conceptum simplicem et proprium sui in aliquo intellectu, et conceptum simplicem et proprium alterius obiecti, nisi contineat illud aliud obiectum essentialiter vel virtualiter: obiectum autem creatum non continet increatum essentialiter vel virtualiter; ergo, etc.—*Secunda pars minoris*, scilicet quod obiectum creatum non

secondly, that God is conceived not only in a concept analogous to the concept of a creature, i.e. one which is wholly other than that which is predicated of creatures, but even in some concept univocal to Himself and to a creature.

And lest there be a dispute about the name "univocation", I designate that concept univocal which possesses sufficient unity in itself so that to affirm and deny it of one and the same thing would be a contradiction. It also has sufficient unity to serve as the middle term of a syllogism, so that wherever two extremes are united by a middle term that is one in this way, we may conclude to the union of the two extremes among themselves.

Univocation in this sense I establish by three arguments:

*Argument I*

The first is this: Every intellect that is certain about one concept but is dubious about others, has besides the concepts about which it is in doubt, another concept of which it is certain. (The subject includes the predicate.)<sup>19</sup> Now in this life already, a man can be certain in his mind that something is a being and still be in doubt whether it is a finite or an infinite being, a created or uncreated being. Consequently, in addition to these latter concepts of the thing, there is a concept of being, which as such is neither the one [e.g. finite being] nor the other [e.g. infinite being], but is included in both of them and therefore is univocal.

Proof of the major: One and the same concept cannot be both certain and dubious. Therefore, either there is another concept (which is our contention) or there is no concept at all, and consequently, no certitude about any concept.

I prove the minor: Every philosopher was certain that what he had posited as a first principle was a being; for instance, one was certain that fire was a being, another that water was a being. Yet he was not certain that it was a created or uncreated being, that it was first or not first. He could not be certain that it was the first being, for then he would have been certain about something false, and what is false is not strictly knowable.<sup>20</sup> Neither was he certain that it was not first; for then he would not have claimed the opposite.

continet virtualiter increatum, et hoc sub ea ratione sub qua sibi attribuitur, ut posterius essentialiter attribuitur priori essentialiter, probatur: quia est contra rationem posterioris essentialiter includere virtualiter suum prius; et etiam patet quod non continet essentialiter increatum secundum aliquid omnino sibi proprium, et non commune; non facit ergo conceptum simplicem et proprium enti increato.

*Tertio* sic: Omnis inquisitio metaphysica de Deo procedit sic: scilicet considerando formalem rationem alicuius, et auferendo ab illa ratione formalis imperfectionem quam habet in creaturis, et reservando illam rationem formalem, et attribuendo sibi omnino summam perfectionem, et sic attribuendo illud Deo.—*Exemplum* de formalis ratione sapientiae, vel intellectus, vel voluntatis. Consideratur enim primo in se et secundum se; et ex hoc quod ratio istorum non includit formaliter imperfectionem aliquam nec limitationem, removeantur ab ipsa imperfectiones quae concomitantur eam in creaturis, et reservata eadem ratione sapientiae et voluntatis, attribuuntur ista Deo perfectissime. Ergo omnis inquisitio de Deo supponit intellectum habere conceptum *eundem univocum*, quem accipit ex creaturis.

*Quod si dicas*, non, sed alia est formalis ratio eorum quae convenient Deo, *ex hoc sequitur inconveniens*, scilicet quod ex nulla ratione propria eorum, prout sunt in creaturis, potest concludi aliquid de Deo, quia omnino alia et alia ratio est istorum et illorum; imo non magis concluderetur quod Deus est *sapiens* formaliter ex ratione sapientiae, quam apprehendimus ex creaturis, quam quod Deus est formaliter *lapis*, potest enim conceptus aliquis alias a conceptu lapidis creati formari, ad quem conceptum lapidis, ut est idea in Deo, habet lapis iste attributionem, et ita formaliter diceretur *Deus est lapis*, secundum istum conceptum analogicum, sicut *sapiens*, secundum illum conceptum analogicum.

*Qualis autem sit univocatio entis, et ad quanta, et ad quae,* dicetur magis inferius in *quaestione de primo obiecto intellectus*.

**TERTIO** dico, quod non cognoscitur Deus naturaliter a viatore in *particulari et proprie*, hoc est sub ratione huius essentiae *ut haec et in se*.

Sed ratio illa posita ad hoc in praecedenti opinione non concludit.—*Cum enim arguitur*, quod non cognoscitur aliquid nisi per *simile*, aut intelligitur de similitudine *univocationis*, aut

This reason is confirmed as follows: Someone perceiving the disagreement among philosophers can still be certain that any of the things that they have claimed as the first principle is a being. Nevertheless, in view of the contrariety of opinions, he could be in doubt whether this or that being is primary. Now if we could demonstrate for such an individual the truth or falsity of one of these alternatives, for example, that fire is not the first being, but is posterior to the first being, we would not destroy his first certain notion of it as a being, but this notion would survive in the particular conception which we had proven. And this also proves the proposition stated as the final conclusion of the argument, namely, that this certain concept, since as such it is neither of the doubtful notions, is preserved in both of them.

Should you not care for this argument based on the diversity of opinion among philosophers, you might say perhaps that each has in his mind two concepts closely resembling each other. Yet, because of the very closeness of the analogy, they seem to be one concept. The following consideration, however, might be urged against this. By such an evasion all possibility of proving the unity of any univocal concept would be destroyed. For if you say that "man" is one concept applicable to both Socrates and Plato, some one will deny it asserting that there are two concepts, but they seem to be one because of their great similarity.

### *Argument II*

My second principal argument is this. In the present life no concept representing reality is formed naturally in the mind except by reason of those factors which naturally motivate the intellect. Now these factors are the agent intellect and the sense image or the object revealed in the sense image.<sup>21</sup> No simple concept, then, is produced naturally in our mind except that which can arise in virtue of these factors. Now, as I shall prove, no concept could arise in virtue of the agent intellect and the sense image that is not univocal but only analogous with, or wholly other than, what is revealed in the sense image. In the present life, since no other such analogous concept could arise in the intellect naturally, it would be simply impossible to have any natural concept of God whatsoever. But this is false.

Proof of the assumption: With the cooperation of the agent

*imitationis.*—Si primo modo, igitur nihil cognoscitur de Deo, quia secundum opinionem illam, in nullo habet Deus similitudinem *univocationis* cum creatura per quam deberet a nobis cognosci. Si secundo modo, etiam creature non tantum imitantur illam essentiam sub ratione *generalis attributi*, sed etiam *hanc essentiam* ut est haec essentia, sive ut nuda, et ut in se, est existens; ergo, secundum eum, propter talem similitudinem posset creatura esse principium cognoscendi essentiam divinam in se et in particulari.

*Est igitur alia ratio* huius conclusionis: quod Deus *ut haec essentia in se* non cognoscitur naturaliter a nobis, quia sub ratione talis cognoscibilis est obiectum *voluntarium*, et non naturale, nisi respectu sui intellectus tantum; et ideo a nullo intellectu creato potest sub ratione *huius essentiae ut haec* naturaliter cognosci. Nec aliqua essentia naturaliter cognoscibilis a nobis ostendit sufficienter hanc essentiam *ut haec*, nec per similitudinem *univocationis*, nec *imitationis*; univocatio enim non est nisi in generalibus rationibus; imitatio etiam deficit, quia imperfecta est, quia creature imperfekte eum imitantur.

Utrum autem sit alia ratio huius impossibilitatis, scilicet propter rationem *primi obiecti*, ut alii ponunt illud esse *quiditatem rei materialis*, de hoc in quaestione de *primo obiecto intellectus*.

QUARTO dico, quod ad multos conceptus *proprios* de Deo possumus pervenire, qui *non conveniunt creaturis*: cuiusmodi sunt conceptus *omnium perfectionum simpliciter in summo*, et perfectissimus conceptus, in quo quasi in quadam descriptione perfectissime cognoscimus Deum, est concipiendo *omnes perfectiones simpliciter et in summo*.

Tamen conceptus *perfectior et simplicior* nobis possibilis est conceptus *entis simpliciter infiniti*. Iste enim est *simplicior* quam conceptus *entis boni*, vel *entis veri*, vel aliquorum similiūm; quia infinitum non est *quasi attributum* vel passio entis sive eius de quo dicitur, sed dicit *modum intrinsecum* illius entitatis: ita quod cum dico *ens infinitum*, non habeo conceptum quasi *per accidens ex subiecto et passione*, sed conceptum *per se subiecti in certo gradu perfectionis*, scilicet *infinitatis*: sicut *albedo intensa* non dicit conceptum *per accidens*, sicut *albedo visibilis*, imo intensio dicit gradum intrinsecum albedinis in se. Et ita patet *simplicitas* huius conceptus, scilicet *ens infinitum*.

and possible intellect, any object revealed in the phantasm or existing as an intelligible species at the very most can produce in the intellect as its adequate effect *a)* a proper concept of itself and *b)* a concept of all that is essentially or virtually included in it.<sup>22</sup> Now this concept which they posit as analogous is neither a proper concept of the object in the sense image nor is it a proper concept of anything virtually or essentially included in it. Consequently, it cannot arise by any such moving factor.

And this argument is confirmed; for except by way of a reasoning process the mind can know nothing from this object besides the proper and adequate concept of the object itself and whatever is included therein in one of the two aforementioned ways. But such a reasoning process presupposes a knowledge of the simple thing to which one reasons.

Consequently, the argument may be formulated briefly as follows: No object will produce a simple and proper concept of itself and a simple and proper concept of another object, unless it contain this second object essentially or virtually. No created object, however, contains the "Uncreated" essentially or virtually; therefore, etc.

We prove the second part of the minor, which is that no created object contains the "Uncreated" virtually—at least in the way that the two are actually related, namely as what is by nature secondary is related to what is by nature prior. For it is contrary to the very notion of what is essentially secondary to include virtually what is prior to it.

It is also obvious that the created does not contain as part of its essence something that is not merely common, but is exclusively proper, to the "Uncreated." Therefore, it produces no simple and proper concept of the "Uncreated" at all.

### *Argument III*

The third proof is this: Every metaphysical inquiry about God proceeds as follows. The formal notion of something is considered; the imperfection associated with this notion in creatures is removed; the highest of all perfection is then ascribed to this formal notion and as such it is attributed to God. Take, for example, the formal notion of "wisdom" or "intellect" or "will". Such a notion is considered first of all simply in itself and abso-

*Perfectio autem istius conceptus multipliciter probatur: tum quia iste conceptus inter omnes a nobis conceptibiles virtualiter plura includit; sicut enim *ens* includit virtualiter *bonum* et *verum* in se, ita *ens infinitum* includit *verum infinitum* et *bonum infinitum* et omnem perfectionem simpliciter sub ratione *infiniti*: tum quia demonstratione *quia* ultimo concluditur *esse de ente infinito*, vel *esse infinitum* de aliquo ente, sicut apparet ex q. 1. 2. dist.: illa autem sunt perfectiora quae ultimo cognoscuntur demonstratione *quia*, ex creaturis, quia propter eorum remotionem a creaturis difficillimum est ea ex creaturis concludere.*

*Si autem dicas de summo bono, vel summo ente, quod illud dicit modum intrinsecum entis, et includit virtualiter alios conceptus, respondeo, quod si summum intelligatur comparative, sic dicit respectum *ad extra*: sed *infinitum* dicit conceptum *ad se*. Si autem intelligatur absolute sumnum, hoc est, quod ex natura rei non possit excedi, perfectio illa expressius concipitur in ratione *infiniti entis*; non enim *summum bonum* indicat in se utrum sit *finitum* vel *infinitum*.*

Ex hoc apparet improbat illius quod dicitur in praecedenti opinione, quod perfectissimum quod possumus cognoscere de Deo est cognoscere *attributa* reducendo illa in esse divinum, propter simplicitatem divinam; cognitio enim esse divini sub ratione *infiniti* est perfectior cognitione eius sub ratione *simplicitatis*, quia simplicitas communicatur creaturis, infinitas autem non, secundum modum quo convenit Deo.

QUINTO dico, quod ista quae cognoscuntur de Deo cognoscuntur *per species creaturarum*; quia sive universalius et minus universale cognoscantur per eamdem speciem minus universalis, sive utrumque habeat speciem intelligibilem sibi propriam, saltem illud quod potest imprimere vel causare speciem minus universalis in intellectu, potest etiam causare speciem cuiuscumque universalioris; et ita creaturae, quae imprimunt proprias species in intellectu, possunt etiam imprimere species *transcedentium*, quae communiter convenient eis et Deo. Et tunc intellectus propria virtute potest uti multis speciebus simul ad concipiendum illa simul quorum sunt istae species: puta specie *boni*, specie *summi*, specie *actus*, ad concipiendum *summum bonum* et *actualissimum*. Quod apparet sic per locum a *minori*: imaginativa enim potest

lutely. Because this notion includes formally no imperfection nor limitation, the imperfections associated with it in creatures are removed. Retaining this same notion of "wisdom" and "will", we attribute these to God—but, in a most perfect degree. Consequently, every inquiry regarding God is based upon the supposition that the intellect has the same univocal concept which it obtained from creatures.

If you maintain that this is not true, but that the formal concept of what pertains to God is another notion, a disconcerting consequence ensues; namely, that from the proper notion of anything found in creatures nothing at all can be inferred about God, for the notion of what is in each is wholly different. We would have no more reason to conclude that God is formally wise from the wisdom we perceive in creatures than we would that He is formally a stone. For it is possible to form another notion of a stone to which the notion of a created stone bears some relation, for instance, stone as an idea in God. And so we could say formally, "God is a stone" according to this analogous concept, just as we say, "He is wise" according to another analogous concept.

What kind of univocation is ascribed to being and how far and to what it extends, will all be discussed more at length in a subsequent question on the primary object of the intellect.<sup>23</sup>

### *Third Statement*

Thirdly, I say that God is not known naturally by anyone in the present life in a *proper* and *particular manner*; that is to say, we do not know Him in His essence itself precisely as *this* essence.

But the reason given for this in the preceding opinion is not conclusive. For, when he [Henry] argues that one thing can be known from another only by reason of what is similar, we can only understand this likeness to be one of univocation or of imitation. If the first is meant, then nothing is known about God, for according to this opinion there is no likeness of univocation between God and creatures whereby He might be known by us. If the second is meant, then creatures would not imitate God's essence merely under the aspect of some general attribute, but also precisely as *this essence*, as naked and as it exists in itself.

uti speciebus diversorum sensibilium ad imaginandum compositum ex illis diversis, sicut apparet imaginando *montem aureum*.

Ex hoc apparet improbatio illius, quod dicitur in praecedenti opinione de illa *suffossione*; quia suffodiendo nunquam illud quod non subest suffossioni invenitur per suffossionem: non autem subest conceptui creaturae aliquis conceptus vel species representans aliquid *proprium* Deo, quod sit omnino alterius rationis ab eo quod convenit creaturae, ut probatum est per *secundam rationem* in *secundo art.*; ergo per suffossionem nullus talis conceptus invenitur.

Et quod adducitur simile de *aestimativa*, dico, quod videtur adduci falsum ad confirmationem alterius falsi; quia si maneat ovis in propria natura, et in eodem affectu naturali ad agnum, mutaretur tamen ovis, ut esset similis lupo, per miraculum, in omnibus accidentibus sensibilius, puta, colore, figura, sono, motu, et huiusmodi, agnus fugeret ovem sic mutatam, sicut fugeret lupum; et tamen in ove sic mutata non esset intentio *nocivi*, sed *proficii* et convenientis; et ita aestimativa agni non suffoderet ad inveniendum intentionem convenientis sub speciebus sensibilibus, sed praecise ita moveretur secundum appetitum sensitivum, sicut accidentia sensibilia moverent.

*Si dicas* quod intentio ibi convenientis non multiplicat se, quia non sunt talia accidentia convenientia tali intentioni, et intentio convenientis non multiplicatur sine accidentibus sibi convenientibus: *hoc nihil est*, quia si agnus hic fugeret propter perceptionem nocivi conceptum ab aestimativa, et tamen illa non multiplicatur cum accidentibus istis sensibilibus, quia non est cum eis talis intentio, stante isto casu, ergo aut hic non est suffossio agni ad intentionem nocivi, quae nulla est, aut si hoc non fugeret per suffossionem, ergo nec alias.

#### Solvuntur Argumenta Principalia

Ad *Argumenta principalia* illius *quaestionis*.—Ad *primum* dico, quod illa comparatio Philosophi debet intelligi quantum ad *primam motionem intellectus ab obiecto*; ibi enim phantasmata cum intellectu agente habent vicem *primi obiecti moventis*; sed non debet intelligi quantum ad *omnem actum sequentem motionem primam*; potest enim intellectus abstrahere obiectum

By reason of this similarity, therefore, a creature according to him could be a principle of knowing the divine essence in itself and in particular.

There is, however, another reason for this conclusion that God Himself as this essence is not an object of natural knowledge for us; for if He be known in this way by any intellect other than His own, it is as a voluntary and not as a natural object.<sup>24</sup> Therefore, He cannot be known naturally by any created intellect precisely as *this essence*. Neither is there any essence naturally knowable to us that would suffice to reveal this essence as *this essence* whether by reason of a likeness of univocation or of imitation. For univocation obtains only where we have general notions. Imitation too is deficient because it is imperfect, for creatures only imperfectly imitate Him.

Whether there is another reason for the impossibility of such knowledge based on the nature of the primary object of the intellect, which some claim to be the quiddity of a material thing, will be discussed in the question on the primary object of the intellect.<sup>25</sup>

#### *Fourth Statement*

Fourthly, I say that we can arrive at many concepts proper to God in the sense that they do not apply to creatures. Such are the concepts of all the pure perfections when taken in the highest degree. And the most perfect concept of all, by which we know God most perfectly, as it were, in a descriptive sort of way, is obtained by conceiving all the pure perfections and each in the highest degree. Now a less perfect but simpler concept is possible to us, namely the concept of a being that is simply infinite. For this is simpler than the concept of "good being" or "true being" or some similar concepts, since infinite is not a quasi-attribute or property of being or of that of which it is predicated. Rather it signifies an intrinsic mode of that entity, so that when I say "Infinite Being", I do not have a concept composed accidentally, as it were, of a subject and its attribute. What I do have is a concept of what is essentially one, namely of a subject with a certain grade of perfection—infinity. It is like "intense whiteness", which is not a notion that is accidentally composed such as "visible whiteness" would be, for

inclusum in aliquo primo movente, et considerare illud abstractum, non considerando illud a quo abstrahit, et considerando illud sic abstractum considerat commune sensibili et insensibili, et in illo considerat insensibile in universalis, sicut et sensibile. Et potest considerare istud abstractum, et aliud abstractum, cum quo fit proprium alteri, scilicet insensibili. Sed sensus non est abstractivus, et ideo in omni actu, tam primo quam secundo, requirit aliquid obiectum primum movens, quomodo non se habet phantasma ad intellectum.

Ad secundum dico, quod Commentator exponit illud *simile* Philosophi de *difficili*, et non de *impossibili*. Et ratio sua est, quia tunc natura fecisset ociose illas substantias abstractas intelligibiles, et non possibles intelligi ab aliquo intellectu.

Sed *ista ratio eius non valet*: *tum* quia non est finis illarum substantiarum in quantum intelligibiles sunt, ut intelligantur ab intellectu nostro, et ideo si hoc non conveniret eis, non propter hoc essent frustra intelligibiles: *tum* quia non sequitur: non sunt intelligibiles ab intellectu nostro; ergo a nullo; possunt enim intelligi a seipsis; et ideo est fallacia *consequentis*.—Unde licet multipliciter posset exponi auctoritas Philosophi, dico tamen quod oculus noctuae non habet cognitionem nisi intuitivam et *naturalem*; et quantum ad istas duas conditiones potest exponi auctoritas Philosophi de *impossibilitate*, quia sicut impossibile est illi oculo naturaliter et intuitive considerare obiectum illud, sic intellectui nostro est impossibile *naturaliter* et *intuitive* cognoscere Deum.

Ad tertium dico, quod infinitum *potentiale* est ignotum, quia unumquodque est cognoscibile in quantum est *in actu*; non tamen ita est ignotum, quod repugnat sibi intelligi ab intellectu *infinito*; sed non potest infinitum cognosci ab aliquo intellectu cognoscente ipsum *secundum modum suae infinitatis*; modus enim suae infinitatis est accipiendo alterum post alterum; et intellectus qui cognosceret hoc modo alterum post alterum, cognosceret semper aliquod *finitum*, et numquam infinitum: intellectus tamen infinitus potest cognoscere *totum illud simul*, non partem post partem.

*Et cum arguitur II. Metaph.* de *infinity et infinito*, dico quod non est simile: quia cognito obiectorum infinitorum numeraliter concluderet infinitatem potentiae cognoscentis, sicut patuit in

the intenseness is an intrinsic grade of whiteness itself. Thus the simplicity of this concept, "Infinite Being", is evident.

Now the perfection of this concept is proved in more than one way. First, from the fact that this concept virtually includes more than any of the others we can conceive. As "being" virtually includes the "good" and the "true", so "Infinite Being" includes the "Infinitely Good", the "Infinitely True" and all pure perfections under the aspect of infinity. It is also proved from this fact. With a *demonstration of the fact*,<sup>26</sup> the existence of an Infinite Being, or the fact that something has infinite being, is the last conclusion to be established. This is clear from distinction two, question one. The more perfect, however, are the last to be established by a *demonstration of fact* which begins with creatures. For their very remoteness from creatures makes knowledge of them from creatures most difficult of attainment.

But if you say that the 'Highest Good' or the "Highest Being" expresses an intrinsic mode of being and includes other concepts virtually, I reply that if "highest" be taken in a comparative sense, then it includes a relation to something extrinsic to the being, whereas "infinite" is an absolute concept. But if "highest" is understood in an absolute sense, i.e., that the very nature of the thing is such that it cannot be exceeded, then this perfection is conceived even more expressly in the notion of an infinite being, because "Highest Good" does not indicate as such whether it is infinite or finite.

This obviously refutes the assertion made in the previous opinion [of Henry], namely that the most perfect knowledge we have of God is to know His attributes as identified with the divine being in virtue of His simplicity. A knowledge of the divine being, however, as infinite is more perfect than a knowledge of Him as simple, for simplicity is shared with creatures whereas infinity, as God possesses it, is not.

#### *Fifth Statement*

In the fifth place, I say that what we know of God is known through intelligible species of creatures. Whether the more universal and less universal have each their own proper intelligible species, or whether both are known through one and the same species, namely, that which is less universal, in any case this is

*q. 1. 2. dist. art. 2.* ad infinitatem, valet, quia ibi pluralitas ex parte obiecti concludit maioritatem virtutis in intellectu; sed intellectio alicuius infiniti *intensive* non concludit infinitatem actus, quia non oportet actum habere talem modum qualem habet obiectum, quia actus sub ratione finiti potest esse ad obiectum sub ratione infiniti; nisi esset actus *comprehensivus*; et concedo quod tale actum circa obiectum infinitum non habemus, nec est possibile.

*Ad Greg.* dico, quod non debet intelligi quod contemplatio sistat sub Deo in aliqua creatura, quia hoc esset *frui utendis*, quod esset summa perversio, secundum Aug. *Quaest. LXXXIII.*, q. 30., sed conceptus illius essentiae sub ratione *entis* est imperfectior conceptu illiusmet essentiae ut *haec essentia* est, et quia imperfectior est, ideo est inferior in intelligibilitate. Contemplatio autem, de lege communi, stat in tali conceptu *communi*, et ideo stat in aliquo conceptu qui est minoris intelligibilitatis quam Deus in se ut *haec essentia*, et ideo debet intelligi ad aliquid *quod est sub Deo*, hoc est, ad aliquid in ratione *intelligibilis* cuius *intelligibilitas* est inferior intelligibilitate Dei in se ut haec essentia singularis.

Ad *argumenta* pro prima opinione.—*Cum arguit*, quod Deus non potest intelligi in aliquo conceptu universalis communi *univoco* sibi et creaturis, quia est *singularitas* quaedam, *respondeo*: *consequentia* non valet; Sortes enim in quantum *Sortes* est singularis, et tamen a *Sorte* plura possunt abstrahi praedicata; et ideo *singularitas* alicuius non impedit quin ab eo quod singulare est possit abstrahi aliquis conceptus communis; et licet quidquid est ibi in re sit singulare ex se in existendo, ita quod nihil contrahat aliud ibi ad singularitatem, tamen illud idem potest concipi *ut hoc* in re, vel quodammodo *indistincte*, et ita *ut singulare* vel *ut commune*.

Quod dicit de cognitione *per accidens* non oportet improbare, quia quasi *per accidens* cognoscitur in *attributo*, sed non praecise sic, sicut supra probatum est.

true. Whatever can imprint or cause a species of what is less universal, can also cause any species of that which is more universal. Thus it is that creatures which impress their own proper species on the intellect can also impress the species of the transcendentals which are common to themselves and to God.<sup>27</sup> In this way, the intellect in virtue of its own power can make use of many such species simultaneously, in order to conceive at one time those things of which these are the species. For instance, it can use the species of "good," the species of "highest," the species of "act" to conceive "the highest good which is pure act." This is clear from an instance of the dialectical rule *a minori*,<sup>28</sup> for the imagination is able to use the species of different things perceptible to the senses and thus imagine a composite of these different elements, as is apparent, for instance, when we imagine a gold mountain.

This obviously refutes the assertion made in the previous opinion regarding the process whereby the intellect burrows beneath the concept of creatures. For by such a process, we can unearth only what lies beneath the surface. But there is nothing in the concept of a creature that would be of a totally different nature than the creature and would be proper to God, as we have proved in the second reason for the second statement. Consequently, we shall never discover such a concept by this burrowing process.

And as to the analogy of the estimative power, I would say that he seems to adduce one false instance to confirm another. For if a sheep were to retain its proper nature together with its natural affection towards a lamb, and yet by some miracle were to be changed accidentally so as to resemble a wolf in all its sensible manifestations, for instance, in its shape, its color, its movements, its cries, and so on, a lamb would flee from such a sheep just as it would flee from a wolf. And still there is nothing in the sheep that is harmful to the lamb, but only what is beneficial. Hence the estimative power would not dig beneath the sense images to discover the friendliness, but would be moved according to the sense appetite in the very way that the sensible appearances move it.

It does not help any to say that this friendliness does not propagate itself because the accidental manifestations in such a

case are not in accord with it, and that this friendliness is not propagated unless the external manifestations are in accord with it. For if the lamb flees from the "wolf" only because it perceives something inimical by its estimative power, and in the present case the intention [of friendliness] is not propagated where the sensible manifestations are those [of a wolf], it follows that the lamb unearths no intention of enmity, since none exists, or if the lamb does not flee in virtue of such a burrowing process in this instance, then neither does it do so in other cases.

#### *Solution of Arguments to the Contrary*

As to the arguments at the beginning of this question:

*To the first,* I reply that the Philosopher's comparison applies to the initial movement of the intellect by the object, for in this case the sense images together with the agent intellect function in the role of primary moving object. It must not be understood, however, of all the actions which follow this initial movement. For the intellect can abstract an object which is included in that which produces the initial movement. It is able to consider the former without considering that from which it was abstracted. Now when the intellect considers something that has been abstracted in this way, it grasps what is common to both sensible and insensible, for it is considering in a universal manner the insensible as well as the sensible. In its consideration the intellect can unite a second abstract notion with the first so that the latter becomes proper to something else, namely, to the insensible. The sense faculty, however, is incapable of making abstractions. Therefore, in all its acts, whether they be primary or secondary, it requires some object to first put it in motion. But this is not the way that the imagination is related to the intellect.

*To the second,* I reply that the Commentator [Averroes] restricts this comparison of the Philosopher to what is difficult, but not impossible, to know. And his reason is that otherwise, nature would have made these separate substances intelligible in vain, for no intellect would be able to know them. But this reason is invalid, first of all, because we cannot say that the sole purpose or reason for the intelligibility of these substances is that we may know them. Consequently even if we could know nothing

about them, we still could not say they are intelligible to no purpose. Secondly, it does not follow that just because these substances are unintelligible to our minds, they are unintelligible to all minds, for they are intelligible to themselves. Therefore, we have a fallacy of consequent. Wherefore I say that even though there are many ways in which this citation of the Philosopher could be explained, still the eye of the bat has only a natural and intuitive knowledge. And on the basis of these two characteristics, the Philosopher's words can be explained even in the sense of an impossibility. For just as it is impossible for the eye of the bat to consider such an object naturally and intuitively, so it is also impossible for our intellect to possess a natural and intuitive knowledge of God.

*To the third* I reply that the potentially infinite is unknown, because to the extent that something is in act it is knowable. But it is not so unknown that it would be impossible for an infinite intellect to know it. Nevertheless the [potentially] infinite cannot be known by an intellect which proceeds to know it in the way that it is infinite. For it is "infinite" only in so far as the mind in considering only one thing after another, never comes to an end. Now the mind which considers only one thing after another in this way always considers something finite and never something infinite. An infinite intellect, however, can know the whole thing at once, and not simply one part after another. And to the argument from the second book of the *Metaphysics* concerning infinite numbers and the "Infinite", I reply that there is no parity between the two, for a knowledge of an infinite number of objects would imply that the faculty of knowledge itself is infinite, (as is clear from question one of the second distinction regarding the infinity of God), since one can infer a greater power of intellect from a greater number of objects known. But a knowledge of something infinite in the order of intension does not imply that the act of knowledge itself be infinite (unless it be an act which fully comprehends the object), for it is not necessary that the act and the object have the same mode of being, since an act which by nature is finite can be related to an object which by nature is infinite. I admit, however, that we neither have, nor can have, such a comprehensive act of knowledge in regard to an infinite object.

*To the fourth argument of Gregory*, I reply that we should not think that contemplation terminates in some creature beneath God, for this would be to enjoy as an end what is to be used as a means. According to Augustine, this would be the greatest perversion. But the concept of God's essence under the aspect of being is more imperfect than the concept of the same essence as "this essence". Now because it is less perfect, it is inferior to, or "beneath", the knowledge of God in Himself, as this singular essence.

#### *A Reply to the Arguments of Henry*

To the arguments for the first opinion:

I reply, that when he argues that God by reason of his unique singularity cannot be known through some universal, univocal concept, common to Himself and creatures, the consequence is invalid. For Socrates, in so far as he is Socrates, is singular. Nevertheless several predicates can be abstracted from Socrates. Consequently, the singularity of a thing is no impediment to the abstraction of a common concept. Though in reality everything in God, since it exists of itself, is singular, so that one thing does not contract another to singularity; nevertheless one and the same thing can be conceived indistinctly or as this thing, existing in reality, and thus it can be conceived either as common or singular.

There is no need to refute what he says regarding an incidental knowledge of God, because God is known in a quasi-incidental manner in an attribute. However, this is not the sole way He can be known, as has been proved above.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

##### *Notes to Introduction*

1. *Bibliography of English Translations from Medieval Sources* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1946).
2. *De caelesti hierarchia*, 2 (PG 3, 141). See also St. John Damascene's *De fide orthodoxa*, I, 4 (PG 94, 800).
3. *De divisione naturae*, I, cc. 14ss (PL 122, 462s).
4. For a further explanation of Scotus' conception of univocation see Wolter, *Transcendentals and their Function in the Metaphysics of D. Scotus*, ch. 3 (St. Bonaventure, N. Y., Franciscan Institute, 1946).
5. *Quodlibetum*, q. 14; see also E. Gilson's excellent discussion in the *Spirit of Medieval Philosophy*, ch. 13 (New York, Scribner's Sons, 1940).

##### *Notes to the Text*

1. Aristotle, *De Anima*, III, 7 (431a 14) The Scholastics were wont to quote Aristotle and the Church Fathers from memory. Frequently they summarize an entire section or several paragraphs in the form of a quotation. For that reason many of Scotus' references are expressions of the sense rather than the text of Aristotle himself.
2. Arist., *Metaphysica*, II, 1 (993b 9).
3. Arist., *Physica*, I, 4 (187b 8).
4. Arist., *Metaphys.*, II, 2 (994b 22).
5. St. Gregory, the Great, *Sermons on Ezechial*, I, homily 8, n. 30 (PL 76, 868).
6. Arist., *Metaphys.*, XI, 7 (1064a 36). See also the parallel text in book VI, chapter 1 (1026a 18).
7. Arist., *Nicom. Ethica*, X, 8.
8. St. John Damascene, *De fide orthodoxa*, I, 4 (PG 94, 800).
9. Arist., *De Interpretatione*, c. 13 (22a 33); c. 14 in fine.
10. Henry of Ghent makes use of this distinction in his *Summa*, art. 22, q. 1 ad 3; *ibid.*, q. 4.
11. Henry, *op. cit.*, art. 22, q. 4; St. Thomas, *Summa theologica*, I, q. 3, art. 4, ad 2.
12. Henry, *op. cit.*, art. 22, p. 4.
13. Henry, *ibid.*
14. Henry maintains that God is already known in a most general manner in every concept the human intellect forms of a created object as "this being". (See Scotus' exposition of Henry's position which follows). Henry, consequently, is forced to hold that we cannot know a creature without at the same time having some knowledge of God. This knowledge of God in creatures, however, must be distinguished from a knowledge of God as He is in Himself. See *Summa*, art. 22, q. 6.
15. *Summa*, art. 24, q. 6.
16. St. John Damascene, *op. cit.*
17. Henry contrasts two radically different concepts. By privatively undetermined being, Henry understands the notion of being as applied to creatures. Actually creatures in their concrete existence are qualified or determinate forms of being, e.g., man is a rational, sentient, organic, material, substantial being. Nevertheless, the mind prescinds from all these determinations to form a simple concept of being, which as conceived is *undetermined* but *determinable*. The concept of being as applied to God, however, denies or negates all determinations and hence is called negatively undetermined being. God is not only being in an unqualified (undetermined) sense of the term, but His being is incapable of any restriction, limitation or determination. Hence, being in this sense is *undetermined* and *indeterminable*. Now *determinable* and *indeterminable* beings have nothing positive in common; they agree only in what they deny, namely, *determination*. Hence our so-called "concept" of being as common to God and creatures is in reality not one concept but two. But because of their similarity, the mind fails to distinguish between the two, even as the eye fails to resolve two distant objects. This dual "concept" is what Henry calls the "analogous concept of being".
18. In Scholastic terminology, "indetermination" as applied to God is a *first intention*. It expresses a perfection of a really existent entity, in this case, the positive mode of existence, infinity. Indetermination, in the second instance, is characteristic not of a real entity, but of our *concept* of being. It is a *second intention*, because it does not refer to a real thing but to an *ens rationis*.
19. That is, it is an analytic or self-evident proposition of the first mode of necessary predication.
20. Only what is true can be an object of knowledge in the strict Aristotelian or scholastic sense of the term (οὐδὲν ἀληθῆ or *scientia*). Hence, "false knowledge" is a contradiction in terms. Similarly, certitude, in the technical sense of the term, presupposes that the proposition to which the mind gives its firm assent is a true and not a false statement.

21. The intellect, according to the general view of the scholastics, is a dual faculty, comprising the active or agent intellect and the patient or possible intellect. This division is based upon an obscure passage in the *De Anima* of Aristotle (III, 5 430a 18) and underwent a variety of interpretations beginning with Alexander of Aphrodisias, who introduced the term "agent intellect". With the Arabians, the Agent Intellect was an "angel" or "Intelligence" produced by the Intelligence of the Moon. With some of the followers of St. Augustine, the Active or Agent Intellect was identified with God (illumination theory of knowledge). With St. Thomas, it is a faculty of the soul really distinct from the "possible intellect". With Scotus the two are not really distinct faculties but represent different aspects of the soul's activity. The general function of the agent intellect is to render the potentially intelligible in the sense image actually intelligible. This mysterious "transformation" gives rise to the intelligible image or *species intelligibilis* which is impressed upon the possible intellect (the passive faculty). The latter, informed by the intelligible species, produces the act of knowledge.

22. Those notions which pertain to the essence of the object (generic, differential, or specific notions) are said to be contained essentially. Color, for instance, is contained essentially in redness. Those notions are said to be virtually contained in a given object, if the object has the power or *virtus* of producing a notion of them in the intellect. In a broad sense, virtual is not opposed to essential, since an object has the power to produce a concept of what it contains essentially. But it includes further all non-essential characteristics as well as those notions which are contained in it as effects are contained in a cause. A baseball, for instance, could produce a simple proper notion of itself as a sphere and also a simple proper notion of a circle, for the notion of circularity is virtually contained in the notion of sphericity. But it could not give rise to a simple notion of a triangle or pentagon. For a fuller explanation of this and the subsequent argument, see Wolter, *Transcendentals and their Function in the Metaphysics of Duns Scotus*, pp. 50 ff.

23. *Opus Oxoniense*, I, d. 3, q. 3.

24. See Gilson's exposition of Scotus' position, *Spirit of Medieval Philosophy*, chap. 13.

25. *Opus Oxoniense*, I, d. 3, q. 3.

26. For the distinction between a demonstration of the fact (*demonstratio quia*) and a demonstration of the reasoned fact (*demonstratio propter quid*), see Aristotle, *Analytica Posteriora*, I, c. 13. In this particular instance, the demonstration of the fact referred to is an *a posteriori* argument which proceeds from effect (creatures) to cause (God). In such a process, that which is most unlike creatures, and consequently most distinctive of God, is the last to be demonstrated.

27. The less universal and more specific the concept, the greater its comprehension or intension. The concept of man, for instance, contains the more universal notions of "animal", "organism", "substance", "being", in its intension. Hence a created object is capable of producing not only a proper concept of itself, but also more universal concepts such as the transcendental notions of being, true, etc., which are common to God and creatures.

28. The Scholastics list a number of *laci* from which a dialectician may draw his arguments. The *locus a minori* assumes that what is within the power of the less perfect, is also within the power of the more perfect.

## EXISTENTIALISM AND METAPHYSICS

### I.

Every negation is the counterpart to an affirmation. A philosophy that begins with an emphatic negation, generally clears the ground for an affirmation. In the movement of thought from pole to pole affirmation springs from negation through a dialectical rebound.

This observation applies, e.g., to ancient Scepticism. The negation—the thesis of the unattainability of reliable truth—is the counterpart to the affirmative idea of an art of living practiced by one who suspends judgment. It applies equally to Kant. Metaphysical competency is denied to reason in order to make room for faith. We find the same dialectic in existentialist philosophy. The negation, in this case, is of utmost radicalism and so is the corresponding affirmation. Hence the movement of thought from pole to pole is of unparalleled vehemence.

Through an analysis of our cognitive powers Kant arrives at a denial of the metaphysical competence of reason, and by "metaphysical competence" is meant the power to understand reality as a meaningful whole. He does not, however, suggest that reality lacks meaning or rationality, far from it. Man as a reasoner, he affirms, is debarred from access to the rational order of things-in-themselves, and only by recognizing this limitation of his does he learn as much of reality as is vouchsafed him.

Kierkegaard, the father of existential philosophy, thinks that Hegel's speculation is nonsense, for it is an attempt to achieve what man could achieve only if he were God rather than man. While attacking Hegel, Kierkegaard actually carries Kant's negation one step further. Man's reason does not enable him to understand reality as a meaningful whole. On this Kant and Kierkegaard agree; and by way of explanation we may add that 'meaningful' signifies here rational in the sense of "including the rationale of human life," or "providing guidance for human life." But Kierkegaard goes beyond Kant by drawing a conclusion which,

it seems, Kant never considered. If reason fails to supply information on a "rational" reality (rational in the just defined sense of the word) the idea of a rational reality itself falls to the ground. By rescinding it we are confronted with Nought and so arrive at the fundamental concept of existential philosophy. All existential thought turns on the idea of Nothingness or Nought, and it may be characterized, therefore, as a form of nihilism—a term used here for the sake of its descriptive potency. The negative move with which existentialism starts as a prelude to its affirmation consists in positing the Nought. Consequently a metaphysics founded on this basis might be described as a negative ontology or meontology, in contradistinction to traditional affirmative ontology.

Speaking of Nought—the substantive noun denoting negation—would be to use an empty word unless it is made clear what precisely is being denied by this negation. In the present case the reference to the negated something is clear enough though it is not always very clearly expressed in the writings of the existentialist philosophers. The obvious answer is, of course, to say that Nought is the negation of Being. But this answer, as Plato has shown in his *Parmenides*, involves the great difficulty of maintaining a distinction between the two. The concepts of Being and Nothing seem to collapse into each other, and by asserting with Hegel that they dialectically pass into each other we get a fresh expression of the fact, but the difficulty is still with us. Since Being is no one particular thing (no "this," in Aristotle's terminology), nor a particular class of things (no "such"), it is nothing either in particular or in general. In short, it is nothing. This being so the difference between ontology and meontology is reduced to a merely verbal distinction, and Parmenides affirming that only Being is would be saying in different words what after him Gorgias maintained with his well-known paradox: "Nothing is."

To escape this absurdity we may place an alternative interpretation upon the "obvious" answer to the question after the meaning of Nought. It is, to be sure, the negation of Being, but Being we now try to understand as the act of Being, thereby relating it closely to the multiple totality of actually existing things. Life has no existence independent of living things. It

is "in" whatever is alive, as a mode of actuality distinctive of the living. Similarly Being might be understood as that actuality of being things which distinguishes them from non-existing things, e.g., the real horse in the stable from the fabulous Pegasus. Life, it is true, defines a class and as a class concept it involves a generic difference by means of which we distinguish living things from inanimate things. Evidently no such relationship obtains between existing and non-existing things, and Being, therefore, is not a class.\* Yet it might still be conceived as analogous to a class. As we accept this as a justifiable answer, Nought as the negation of Being assumes an assignable meaning which, vague though it otherwise be, is at any rate safe against suffering a dialectical sea-change into its own opposite. We arrive at that meaning of nothing which makes intelligible such sentences as: "God created the world from nothing," or "why is there something rather than nothing?" The evanescent Nought takes on a measure of ontological concreteness.

Being, we affirm, should be understood as the act of Being, an act performed in various modes and degrees by the totality of existing things. Let us now add (introducing what might be called the principle of classical rationalism) the further observation that this Being, in order to become the object of a rational study, metaphysics, should be conceived of as intelligible or rational; and again we take this latter term as involving the idea of meaning, i.e., as defining a goal or purpose for us, for man as an agent. This enrichment of the concept of Being reflects on its antithetical partner: Nought must be understood not only as the void of non-existence but also as the vacuity of meaninglessness. It may be difficult to separate completely these two components or polar aspects of the Nought—the void (of existence, of simple "there-ness") and the vacuity (the privation of meaning), for with their complete separation the first of the two elements would again collapse and become undistinguishable from its own opposite, Being. Nonetheless, this bipolarity of the Nought and the distinction which it involves ought to be borne in mind. The failure to make that distinction is a cause of much suggestive obscurity in existentialist writings.

On the basis of these elementary clarifications we obtain the idea of philosophy (or metaphysics) as confronted with a choice

between two fundamental and diametrically opposed hypotheses. The first, which may be called ontological affirmation, becomes the basis of ontology (the theory of Being); the second, termed ontological negation, might give rise to meontology (the theory of Non-Being), provided this second hypothesis is actually amenable to theoretical development.

The fundamental hypothesis of affirmative ontology posits Being in the full sense of the word, involving existence actualized in a meaningful or rational reality. This correlation of Being and rationality does not, however, imply full intelligibility to us. Instead it demands a duality of principles of gradation as follows. In the first place there are degrees of rationality in the sense in which a living organism reveals a greater wealth of rationality or meaningful structure than some congeries of inanimate matter, or in which a drama by Shakespeare is more meaningful a whole than a dictionary, the history of mankind than a row in a wayside inn. Every attempt to describe reality as a whole, as, for example, in terms of evolution or emergent evolution, is based on gradation of objective rationality. The familiar formula of degrees of "integration plus diversification" is but an attenuated expression of the same basic idea.

In the second place, there are degrees of intelligibility to us, and by no means does this second gradation coincide with the first one. Our knowledge of the human mind is more limited at present, and will probably remain so in the future, than our knowledge, of, say, atomic structures, but it does not follow that mental operations exhibit less rationality than atomic processes. Here as in many other cases the order of objective rationality is inversely related to the order of intelligibility to us. Bearing this distinction of two types of gradation in mind (and it is either stated or implied wherever the scheme of affirmative ontology is grasped) we may try to conceive of a Supreme Being which is consummate rationality and yet almost entirely unintelligible to us. The first gradation, so we may express the situation, derives from rationality by itself, the second from reason as a human faculty. The first describes an ideal of knowledge which we can only approximate, the second a procedure imposed upon us by our status as men.

The alternative hypothesis of negative ontology (or meont-

ology) posits non-Being or Nought. To say that nothing is may seem to involve a contradiction or else to be a meaningless statement. This difficulty, however, can be avoided or, at any rate, decreased by understanding the idea of Nought as heavily weighted in the direction of vacuity (of meaning) rather than of void (of existence). Furthermore, positing non-Being (or Nought) can not possibly mean the exclusion of Being: just as an ontology based on the thesis of Being is inconceivable without inclusion of non-Being. The two contrasting theses must be thought of as mutually exclusive and opposed to each other insofar only as affirmative ontology maintains the primacy of Being over Nothing, whereas negative ontology reverses this order. With these qualifications, a measure of meaning accrues to the meontological hypothesis, odd and useless though it might still appear.

It will be wise, however, to reserve judgment. The mere fact that a rival hypothesis, however unattractive, can be opposed to ontological affirmation; the fact that making this affirmation involves a choice or option—this alone is of greatest interest and reveals something about the nature of metaphysics. The espousal of affirmative ontology in terms of a choice between alternatives can be expressed as a choice between principles of causal explanation as in Plato's *Philebus*: "Shall we say that in general and over this so-called whole there rule the power of the irrational and random and chance, or on the contrary, that, as our ancestors held, everything is ordered and governed by reason and some marvelous wisdom?" (28d). The question recurs in the *Sophist*, and here too it is expressed as preliminary to the treatment of more specific questions: Shall we say that all beings, living and inanimate, owe their existence to nature, working "through some mechanical cause devoid of reason, or that they are brought forth by God with reason and Divine Knowledge?" (265c).

The choice proposed here is between affirmative ontology—the thesis of Being—and its negative antithesis. The emphasis in the Platonic questions is on the "principle of rationalism," the identification of Being and rationality. Accordingly, the antithesis to Being, non-Being or Nothing as a metaphysical principle, is couched in negative terms such as "irrational" (*ἄλογον* or "without reason" (*ἄνεν διανοίας*)). Far from being a logical

artifice this is a real question, or rather it is THE question of metaphysics. Acceptance of the thesis of affirmative ontology involves, as Plato puts it, a risk (*ξινδυνός*, *Philebus* 29a), but one worth taking.

Shifting from a strictly Platonic to a more modern terminology we view ontological affirmation as an act of rational faith, involving two elements: the anticipatory comprehension of, and the assent to, an unverified hypothesis. For the authentication of this faith two requirements must be fulfilled. In the first place, the affirmation must be constructive, initiating a process of verification rather than allowing us to rest content with the unverified. Secondly, the assent must have the specific character of total commitment.

Metaphysics as a coopérative pursuit is progressive and, at the same time, reiterative. While carrying forward a cumulative process of verification and interpretation its very principle is continually under attack and must continually be reaffirmed in the face of creative challenges. The question at issue must be treated as one of greatest moment and vital concern for everyone, or else its meaning is missed. The challenge offered to ontological affirmation by the existentialist's ontological negation differs from former challenges in that it moves on the very level at which the metaphysical problem arises. The challenge of Positivism, for instances, is both more insidious and less metaphysically fruitful because it denies the relevance of the metaphysical question rather than the validity of specific metaphysical answers. Not so existentialist meontology. By offering a genuine alternative to affirmative ontology and, thereby, to the ontological pattern of traditional metaphysics, it forces the mind into a renewal of the fundamental question. It helps us recapture the meaning of the enterprise called metaphysics.

At the same time, the peculiar difficulty under which the idea of the primacy of Nothing over Being labors becomes evident. The common sense view that negation follows affirmation is borne out by analysis. In order to speak meaningfully about Nothing reference must be made to its affirmative counterpart—to the something which is denied by the negative term. This is why the development of ontological negation into a theory tends to result in a "parasitical" doctrine, i.e., in statements which derive

their meaning from the very conceptions whose validity they deny. Instances of this "fallacy of unavowed reference" we shall meet presently.

The difficulty which results from giving priority to Nought over Being (to negation over affirmation) may be illustrated by Heidegger's conception of "being-at-home" (*Zuhausesein*) in the world, the attitude by which a familiar reality is confidently and quietly accepted. From the point of view of existential ontology, Heidegger affirms, the negative counterpart to this attitude, the experience of alienation, is the primary or more fundamental phenomenon (*Sein und Zeit*, p. 189). Why so, we wonder. As we reflect upon the emotional facts of the polar situation no decision regarding this question of order or priority can be reached. Love, the fondness we feel for a world in which we move with trust and delight as though it were made for us, the affect, so to speak, through which we affirm the essential goodness in things, is a solid emotional fact, and so is anxiety (*Angst*), the experience of a strange and uncanny multitude of things, persevering unintelligibly in brute existence, a mere screen placed between ourselves and nothingness.

Interpretation, it is true, is latent in feelings, and it is on interpretation with reference to an ultimate principle that Heidegger rests his case. The priority of Nothing over Being requires the priority of estrangement (*Unheimlichkeit*) in the world over familiarity. But the facts impartially inspected do not support this view. Admitted that the two experiences are strictly correlative in the sense that the "being-at-home" is always seen against the foil of alienation, and *vice versa*. Yet there is a difference, and this difference is all in favor of the positive experience. Not only is it possible to think without contradiction a condition of perfect shelteredness and peace unruffled by any thought of possible privation, but experience itself, however remotely, approximates to this consummation. The richer and the more intense the experienced fulfilment, the narrower the margin of felt negation. The opposite is true of the experience of estrangement. Its intensity increases with the broadening of the contrasting margin until it reaches the point of self-destruction. The first experience rests in itself, revolving securely upon the pole of affirmation whereas the second experience consists in an unhappy

oscillation between negation and affirmation which threatens to break up the unity of the experiencing self.

As we describe the normal aspect of reality in human experience we are more faithful to the actual data in stating a mixture of opposing features. There are features of obvious intelligibility and familiarity, and there is also the opposite, and the two contrasting aspects shade off into each other through a wide scale of intermediaries. Owing to the prevalence of this middle-ground science as an investigation of specific traits of this reality is possible. Owing to this same ambivalence there is also room for metaphysics, i.e., for an investigation of reality as a whole which brings us face to face with the choice between two alternative hypotheses, ontological affirmation and its opposite, ontological negation. No easy decision one way or the other is possible. But surely if we seek indications in the field of what I may be permitted to call ontological attitudes or emotive aspects of reality, the greater plausibility lies with the view which the Scholastics expressed in describing man's status in the world as *in via* (on the way) as contrasted with *in patria*. The mixture of familiarity and foreignness is admitted. At the same time, the idea of a total accord (of man with that in which or with which he has his existence) is regarded as an emotional *a priori* with reference to which man can understand both the plight and the prospects of his situation. It is, to say the least, doubtful whether this much can be said of Heidegger's negative thesis.

The same question of a basic attitude can also be raised in respect to the way in which man views his fellowman. Here too we may try to discover a fundamental mode of experience (or aspect of the experienced reality). And this mode may then be characterized not as mere psychological fact but as an ontological determinant—as an essential feature of man's sociability (*Mitsein*). This time it is Sartre who, departing from Heidegger's admirable analysis of *Mitsein* (*Sein und Zeit*, pp. 117-125), advances the thesis which naturally results from the negative metaphysical premiss. Conflict, he writes, "is the original meaning of the being-one-for-another" (*L'être et le néant*, p. 431). In this case too, by a parallel argument, it can be shown that hostility presupposes friendship ("love" understood as *φιλία*)

in a sense in which friendship does not presuppose hostility, and that a theory of communal life can be based only on the idea of the priority or naturalness of friendship. But a development of the social and political implications of the existentialist's metaphysical premiss lies beyond the scope of our essay.

## II.

Negation generally can pave the way for affirmation only because it is directed from the outset by an affirmative intent. So also ontological negation: denying as it does the metaphysical competence of reason along with the traditional object of metaphysics, a rationally ordered world, it is prompted by a demand made upon reason and not fulfilled by it. Reason, presuming to interpret reality as a meaningful whole, should include within its rational scheme the concrete existing individual. But this it is unable to achieve. The individual, the existentialist critique of reason asserts, is unassimilable to any pattern of rational explanation. This idea of the concrete individual expresses the affirmative intent which animates and directs the existentialist's negations. He is recognized by his peculiar pathos. His declared purpose is to restore to integrity the concept of the individual, stunted, so he believes, by the imposition upon it of necessarily inadequate patterns of rational explanation.

Besides being an individual, man is "man in general," i.e., a specimen of the human race, and he is furthermore a Caucasian or African by racial extraction, an American or Frenchman by nationality, a journalist or an artisan by profession, and so forth. But all these classifications by means of which we define the individual as "such an one" do not touch his individuality—that which he, properly speaking, is. As an individual he is unique and irreplaceable, beyond the reach of any classificatory system. Evidence of this uniqueness of the individual is his peculiar relationship to time. His life is not a repeatable occurrence but an event in the full sense of the word, occupying a singular place in the moving texture of historical reality. And this "historicity" of the individual is not merely an accidental tinge, as it were, modifying the common hue of humanity. Man is a son of his time in the radical sense that his thoughts and beliefs, his

response to the world and his action upon it, are fruits of the historical moment.

It may be said that man shares the character of uniqueness with all concrete temporal things, animate or inanimate. But with him it wins a peculiar significance, being not a *datum* but a *factum*. He does not find himself as the unique being that he is but he continually makes himself into what he is. Not as a static but as a dynamic entity we must conceive him, reversing, as far as he is concerned, the principle according to which *operari sequitur esse*. Futurity is the eminent form of his temporal status. Man is becoming, or more precisely he is continually poised upon the brink of decision. And this decision has the character of a radical Either/Or. Man who in deciding makes himself can also become his own unmaking. The question for him is whether to be or not to be.

Precariously balanced as he is on the sharp edge of decision man is infinitely concerned about his own being. He cares for many things with varying degrees of intensity. But underlying these particular cares there is the care of all cares, the anxious concern for his own existence. If, following Kierkegaard, we give to an absolute desire, i.e., to one which by its nature takes precedence over all other desires, the name of passion we may define man in modification of the traditional formula as an *animal passionale*.

The triad of features—historicity, decision, and passion—determines the conception of man which the existentialist uses as his affirmative criterion. Tested by this touch-stone reason, he holds, is found wanting. He rejects the thesis of affirmative ontology because of the actual or alleged inability of reason to comprise within its scheme of reference this unabridged idea of the existing individual.

The work of reason in its metaphysical use, which consists in comprehending a meaningful totality, may be thought of either as reached by approximation only or as actually completed. In neither case can it include the concrete individual, according to the existentialist's argument. It is true that the individual lives into the future, and to this extent futurity is the dominant trait of man's temporal status. But this futurity is (*sit venia verbo*) a present futurity, an emphasis determining the experienced Now.

The fatal decision must be made at this present moment, and what is done can never be undone. Therefore the agent must rely with unconditional trust upon his decision. But rational knowledge, proceeding by approximation, is unable to furnish principles of final validity, for all its positions are provisional and hypothetical. Hence knowledge, conceived as approximative, is irrelevant to the individual's business of living his life.

The same negative result is obtained if we look upon reason's work as completed. In this case reality is before the reasoner as a comprehensive whole, i.e., a closed system of determinations. But it is characteristic of the concrete individual to live into an open field of possibilities which he determines by acts of free decision. Hence the individual resists inclusion in a closed system. Whenever he tries to think of himself as so included, he argues himself out of the concrete situation within which he is to act instead of elucidating it, and thus his knowledge becomes an evasion. He will, for example, say: "History (a name for the comprehensive whole) at present tends towards the eclipse of liberal-capitalist institutions, and so demands of me . . ." But this is a confusion of categories. History, conceived of as a whole of determinations, does not demand anything. By definition it excludes the one on whom alone demands can be made, the concrete individual.

Leaving aside the disjunction of approximation and completeness the matter may be put as follows. Knowledge reveals to us reality as a realm of essences or essential structures. To know a thing is to determine it as a "such." A physicist, e.g., studies the atom not as this particular atom but as manifesting in its own particular case the general structure of the atom as such. The individual, however, is not expressible in terms of essential structure. With him existence precedes essence. He is not such an one but in existing he determines himself into such an one. Far from being a definable entity among other entities, his mode of existence is freedom for possibilities. For to be free means precisely to be non-determined, not under the sway of the sphere of essences. It means to be confronted with infinite possibilities, and the sphere of the merely possible, it should be noted, is a negative concept. Possible is that whose being (or coming-into-being) is not necessitated within a realm of essential structures. Hence the

attempt to include the individual in a system interpreting reality as a whole inevitably destroys the concept of the individual by assimilating him to what he is not. Man, who is a person, is falsely viewed as a thing.

Man is human insofar as he is an individual, and individuality means uniqueness. This admitted we must ask what uniqueness means. The existentialist tends to emphasize the negative element of this concept as though it were chiefly a principle of distinction or diversification. The individual as unique is not part of a group, is not any other individual nor all the others nor is he like them. The individual is what he is by distinguishing himself from the rest of the world. He is non-Being with reference to all other Beings and thus the principle of negation. This *motif* is particularly marked in Sartre but it is forecast in Kierkegaard.

The existentialist conception of the individual conveys a truth but a truth out of balance. It bases individuality on the negative idea of total otherness. Actually, however, uniqueness follows singleness, and singleness in turn is based on identity of essential relation. The value we place on the right of free speech may serve as an illustration. In matters which are subject to everyone's judgment because they elude specialized knowledge everyone, we hold, should have his say. We do not cherish this conviction in the belief that diversity of opinions (each the unique expression of a unique person) is valuable as such. Diversity may mean confusion as well as abundance. All individuals, we rather believe, are related to truth which is one and the same for all but incompletely understood even by the wisest. By silencing one single individual, however humble, we may rob mankind of a part of truth. So we value uniqueness of expression because we think of each single individual as equally related to truth. Likewise we respect the uniqueness of the individual (that whereby he differs from others) not for its own sake but for its being the result of what all individuals have in common. By being no respecters of persons do we honor personality. Once more: in the order of things uniqueness, the negative term, follows the affirmative idea of singleness based on identity of essential relation.

Far from being injurious to individuality the individual's relation to one super-individual truth which reason establishes

is the foundation of the individual as individual. To the extent that it denies this "identity of essential relation" (to the common goal and purpose of mankind) existentialism defeats its purpose and destroys personality by trying to rescue it. Yet there is truth in the existentialist assertion. The individuality of the individual is endangered wherever an accidental relation is substituted for the essential one. If we deal with man under one of his special relations or aspects as though we were dealing with man himself then indeed his individuality is denied. It is obvious almost to everyone that man as a tailor or as a violinist is not man himself, and that man's animality does not exhaust his personality (although the former truth is often practically ignored by the institutions of industrialized society and the latter obfuscated by naturalistic philosophies). But if it comes to more elevated notions of man as, e.g., man as the member of a class which is to become mankind—the case of communism—or man as the member of a nation,—the case of nationalism—the mistake is generally overlooked, and a protest on behalf of the individual is in order. The harm is done, however, not by the general concept as such but by its inadequacy.

The existentialist critique of false generalities rightly connects the uniqueness of the individual with his historicity, i.e., with his unique place in the series of historical events. But again the false emphasis on uniqueness as otherness is to be rectified. The individual's essential historicity can not mean his living in a Now defined as that moment which is not like any other moment and in that sense unique. Strictly taken this would mean that man-as-living-now is unexpressible at any other moment and, therefore, unknowable, a *homo absconditus*. More loosely used the same idea tempts people into substituting for non-historical generalities historical ones as though the latter were less dangerous to individuality (actually, they are more so). Deluded by the historicist fallacy they feel they have advanced beyond the naive idea of man-in-general by speaking about primitive man, Renaissance man, Western man, and with special confidence, about contemporary man. The truth of the matter is, once more, that uniqueness follows singularity. Every single man lives out on his own account the universal theme of humanity, and all his unique traits, his sex, his bodily constitution, his racial

and cultural inheritance, his social environment, and the like, owe their unique relevance to the universality of human nature actualized not by a group nor even by mankind in its entirety but by each man singly.

A similar criticism applies to the second feature of the existentialist's triune portrait of the individual: man as the chooser. That to decide means to determine the undetermined, and that man as a free agent acts into a field of possibilities—these are descriptive statements which no interpretation in terms of a non-human reality should be allowed to tamper with. But once again we find the meaning of this existentialist reminder obscured by a bias in favor of negative definition which has its roots in ontological negation. The field of possibilities that renders decision possible (and, at the same time, necessary) is defined as Nothingness—that is to say, as non-Being with reference to the determinateness of Being, and decision appears as a *creatio ex nihilo*. Since nothing is determined previous to decision, everything for man depends on decision.

In point of fact, however, decision is choice, and choice is possible only within a concrete, and that means limited, field of possibilities. We choose among a determined set of determined possibilities and in relation to a fixed standard of preference. This is another way of saying that all decision is rational choice of the better in preference to the worse with a view to attaining the good. Instead of being incompatible with a philosophy of essences choice involves an essence of a peculiar character—one without whose presence the idea of a structure of essences would be a mere speculative dream. This peculiar essence—the essence of man—defines a being which is to become of itself what it (potentially) is, and rational choice is the mode of the spontaneous self-actualization (the mode of the “of itself”) of this unique entity.

By equating determined possibilities with “means,” and the standard of choice with “end” we arrive at a vindication of the well-known Aristotelian principle according to which choice is between means only. But in order to be true to the facts (and to an insight gained or regained by Existenz philosophy) this classic principle requires a modification. The standard of choice, the good, though fixed and therefore not a determinable pos-

sibility in the sense in which actions are determinable by choice, is grasped by an act of comprehension which in turn involves a quasi-choice. This quasi-choice, the "option of the soul" which underlies all choices between means, is the same act of rational faith, or withholding of faith, from which the alternative hypotheses of ontological affirmation and ontological negation spring. This *arbitrium originale* (the "fair risk," as it is called in Plato's *Phaedo*, 114d) is not rational in the sense in which the choice between means towards a fixed end is rational. Unlike the latter it is not analyzable into a practical syllogism. Even less is it irrational in the sense of an unaccountable plunge into the void of negative possibilities. Transrational would be a more fitting predicate for the act in question, for it furnishes the foundation of rationality. Far from being a blind belief subsisting outside the field of rational enquiry, it animates the quest of metaphysics and is, at the same time, continually put to test by it.

With these clarifications before us a just appraisal of the third and final trait of the existentialist portrayal of man is not difficult. Once more we recognize in the idea of man as a passionate being the discovery or rediscovery of an important truth. It is perfectly correct to say, with the Grand Inquisitor in Dostoevski's *Brothers Karamasov*, that man prefers not to live to living without something to live for. Man, living his own life and knowing, however dimly, that salvation or perdition is at stake, is infinitely concerned about himself, and he is relieved of this anxiety only by complete abandon or, to use a more adequate expression, by absolute commitment. Man shows his folly but also his grandeur by preferring an insane Fuehrer to a raise in wages. Man is in truth an *animal passionale*; but the existentialist errs in placing a negative interpretation on his correct observation.

Passion, defined as an absolute desire, is a desire satisfied with *nothing but* an absolute fulfilment. It is, therefore, the denial of all those conditional gratifications and purposes which are generally at hand within the ambit of our terrestrial life. Following this line of thought, Jean-Paul Sartre recognizes in destruction a basic attitude (*conduite*) of man towards Being (*op. cit.*, pp. 42-44). Here we must demur and point out that this is only one side of the story. A purely negative definition of the object of total commitment equals in practice a formal definition. Instead

of giving guidance to action, it can be filled by acting man with an indefinite variety of contents. Total devotion may be granted to a beloved person as in nihilistic romantic love, to sensuous beauty as in nihilistic aestheticism, or to the nation as in contemporary nihilistic nationalism. And the lure behind all these forms of passionate attachment may in fact be the yearning, voluptuous or austere, for death and destruction. However, every desire, as desire of something, is defined by its proper object. So it will not do to define passion by a negation of objects which is tantamount to defining it by its intensity.

The object of desire may be called a good. Now it is true that the proper object of an absolute desire, the sovereign good, is a negation insofar as it is not all the other goods. But this negative role of the *summum bonum* becomes meaningful only against the background of its affirmative or constructive character. All the other goods are ambivalent; they are good if striven for in the right order (in the right way, in the right measure, at the right time), evil if willed out of order. And the principle which defines this order (and thereby determines the goodness of relative goods) is the absolute or supreme good. We may be permitted to call the supreme good, conceived of as existing, God. The existentialist idea of man as a passionate being may then be re-formulated by asserting that man is a God-loving being. But he does not love God in the way in which a plant turns to the sun, but of his own free will. So, instead of loving God, he may choose to love other things as though they were God.

With these rectifications the existentialist idea of the concrete, existing individual as a being of unique worth, determining himself and actuated by passionate concern, no longer supports the verdict passed upon reason on the ground of its alleged metaphysical impotence. Instead it becomes clear that reason, the faculty which provides us with a measure of insight into the world and ourselves, is at the same time a constituent of man as an existing individual. To understand his own uniqueness, to make his decision intelligent, and to help love discover its true object, the individual must see himself as part of a rational, i.e., meaningful, reality. In fact any pattern of meaning which metaphysics may hope to discover in reality as a whole must be

predelineated in the triple structure of the existing individual, or else it will not be meaningful to us as human beings.

The two-pronged argument taken from the idea of a rational system as either approximated or completely established loses its destructive power if brought in contact with the suggested emendations of existentialist anthropology. The assertion that the approximative character of knowledge prevents it from becoming relevant to the urgency of the present moment of decision is to be countered by the concept of rational faith which outruns and, at the same time, guides reason. And a reply is also available to the alternative assertion according to which knowledge, if completely established as a closed system, precludes freedom. This reply will have recourse to our distinction between the gradation of rationality as embodied in reality on the one hand, and gradation of intelligibility to us on the other. To the rational system in the former sense the argument need not apply; and any system in the sense of a human construct (reflecting intelligibility to us) is by its nature an "open system." To express the matter in theological terms: there is no contradiction between believing in providence and maintaining man's inability to acquire any knowledge of it which goes beyond the barest outline and allows for application to individual fate. Nor is there a contradiction between the idea of a knowledge of reality as a meaningful whole, and the idea of a gradual approach from afar to this knowledge by the existing individual, provided this approach is conceived as bound up with an actual transformation and assimilation of the individual to the meaning aimed at and espied in varying degrees of clarity. The scheme of affirmative ontology makes sense only if its "existential" significance is understood. In order to be meaningful an all-comprehensive whole must define man's place in it—so our earlier assertion. The "place of man," we now amplify, must be such that it can be either missed or hit by living man, with a scale of intermediate possibilities, and that the knowledge in question can be an aid in filling this place properly. Metaphysics as based upon what we call "ontological affirmation" involves the idea of philosophy as a way of life.

The anti-metaphysical argument of the existentialist is tinged by a significant ambiguity. From stating a logical discrepancy it shifts to warning against a moral danger. No metaphysical

scheme of thought is capable of including the concrete individual—this is the basic negative contention. It is followed up by the suggestion that in the attempt to make the impossible possible (and here the shift occurs) the individual uses thought as a subterfuge. He runs away from his selfhood as he is generally inclined to do, and the existentialist critique of reason is designed to bring him up short and to force him, as it were, into his own presence. Existential analysis thus becomes a means by which the individual is recalled from the superficiality of a sham existence (*Uneigentlichkeit*) to authentic selfhood (*Eigentlichkeit*). But how is that possible, we must ask, unless reason (the faculty which enables us to criticize reason) has that vital importance for the concrete individual of which it is divested by the existentialist negations? Here we have another evidence of the "parasitical" element in Existenz philosophy. The idea of philosophy as a way of life, denied in principle, actually survives.

### III.

It is impossible to let the individual stay suspended in a metaphysical void. With his idea of the concrete individual the existentialist maneuvers himself into a position which reminds one of the plight of Kirillov in Dostoevski's *The Possessed*: "We need God and so he must exist—but I know He doesn't and can't." The conclusion arrived at is an intolerable impasse. On the one hand, the existing individual is pictured as relentlessly exacting in his demand upon meaning. Nothing short of a total fulfillment will do for him, and to go back on this demand (a common thing though this renunciation is) involves loss of personality in sham existence. On the other hand, reason's claim to discover meaning is void. How is it possible to abide by so glaring a contradiction?

We are free to recoil from this contradiction only on pain of self-loss, the existentialist replies. Not only should we in faithfulness to ourselves abide by the bankruptcy of logic but we should dwell upon it and recognize in it the débâcle of our existence. The breakdown of reason is to induce in us a crucial experience called crisis. In crisis the negative move of existentialist thought pierces the core of individual existence. Through

anxiety (*Angst*) the individual actually experiences Nothingness, and at the same time discovers his freedom—the total indeterminacy of sheer possibility with which he is confronted. And by virtue of discovering himself as free he can "choose himself."

These three concepts—anxiety, freedom, self-choice—form a pattern of despair sharpened to the point of crisis. Existentialist analysis as a practical enterprise is designed both to induce this crisis and bring it to a happy issue. The experienced denial which is despair prepares the mind for an affirmation—the dialectical rebound for the sake of which the negations are advanced, the emergence into plenitude of meaning of that initial affirmation which is enveloped in the idea of the existing individual. Existenz philosophy might be described as a philosophical commentary on the saying that one must lose his life to save it. (St. Luke, 9:24). The nothing which it posits is to become productive of something.

The question as to how anxiety becomes productive (the question of the resolution of the theoretical deadlock which is involved in crisis) brings existentialists to a parting of roads. Kierkegaard and those who follow him think of this resolution as a rationally unaccountable and sudden act, entirely discontinuous in relation to the preceding critical process of reasoning, a miraculous leap. Rightly or wrongly, they identify the existentialist crisis with the crisis of sin, repentance, and conversion, the resolution of the deadlock with the action of God's grace, and so the leap lands them in Christian faith. Philosophy becomes a preamble to a theology divorced from metaphysics, and reason's chief business consists in clearing itself out of the way. Karl Jaspers, while secularizing Kierkegaard's thought, remains close to the inspiration of the Danish master. The transcendent intuition which flashes upon the mind in the situation of crisis (*Grenzsituation*) is, according to Jaspers, not amenable to rational verification.

Martin Heidegger strikes out in a different direction, and so does Jean-Paul Sartre. Only with reference to these two thinkers can we speak of a metaphysical theory of Nothing or meontology. Instead of disrupting the continuity of analysis by a "leap" they try to develop anxiety (which is to Nothing as love is to the identity of Being and Goodness) into an organ

of ontological interpretation. With this end in view Edmund Husserl's phenomenology is put in the service of existentialist interpretation.

Mind or consciousness (thinking, perceiving, willing, desiring, feeling) is invariably consciousness of something. We can not think without thinking something, and the same is true of all other conscious operations. This is what Husserl, following suggestions of Franz Brentano's, identifies as the "intentional" structure of the mind. It is characteristic of the mind to intend something other than itself, to be with objects which are not the mind, to transcend itself towards what it is not. In this sense we may also speak of the mind's "transcendence," reducing that term to its literal meaning. To say that the mind externalizes itself is another way of putting the matter, and in adopting this language it is well to remember that the expressions "external" and "internal" have their primary meaning in relation to the unique structure of mental operations and that their more restricted spatial meaning derives from this origin.

Heidegger and Sartre are to be credited with having restored to its authentic significance the great principle of intentionality which, in Husserl's own later writings (especially in the *Méditations Cartésiennes*), had become obscured. Used aright this principle serves to confirm the truth of metaphysical realism. The mind is not prior to reality in the sense that it orders or moulds impressions into a world. In no sense is it a creative or formative principle. All mental activity presupposes the existence of real objects subsisting "outside" the mind and to be "intended" by it, and these objects are real in basically the same sense in which the thinking and perceiving mind perceives itself as real. So there is no one-way relationship of the conditioning to the conditioned but reciprocity or circularity, and metaphysical thought is bound to be circular in the sense that it follows and reveals a circularity in the structure of Being. Real things do not just happen to be reflected by our thinking them but it is their inmost nature to be thinkable. Likewise, thinking does not just happen to be associated with something real, a psychological event which in turn is bound up with an organized human body, but by its inmost nature it is an actual occurrence and the awareness of this occurrence, the two in the most intimate and inseparable connection.

arable unity. Everything we call real belongs in this circle of thinkable existents and existents which, in thinking other existents, are aware of themselves as existing. Furthermore, what we call unreal, e.g., dream images or mathematical constructs, are only relatively so, i.e., in relation to reality as circumscribed by ontological circularity. This circularity is not a dialectical construction but a concrete datum, in fact, the condition of all concreteness, the situation in which all our discoveries are made and to which even the most highly technical and specialized theorems, say, of nuclear physics, refer—the primary datum of man-with-other-men-in-the-world.

The fundamental situation of man-with-men-in-the-world is the ultimate horizon of meaning within which all more specialized and restricted meanings receive their proper scope and relevance. To discover the truth of something, i.e., to reveal what a thing really is means to place it properly within that context. This applies also to supernatural or transcendent truths as, for example, the concept of eternal beatitude. It is meaningful only if conceived as a reality to which the fundamental situation "man-in-the-world" points as to its fulfilment. The truth expressed by these assertions is in no need of discovery in the way in which the second law of thermo-dynamics needs to be discovered. Before we discover this law we are utterly ignorant of it. Not so in matters of metaphysics. What we call the fundamental situation is continually within the field of mental vision of every intelligent being, living in the world. Generally it is perceived in that marginal and inarticulate fashion which is sufficient for the business of living. At the same time it is readily distorted and concealed by intellectual attention to one or the other aspect of reality. Discovery in metaphysics is, therefore, both articulation of familiar truths and recovery of lost ones.

Measured by this standard of metaphysical truth Cartesian and post-Cartesian idealism errs in two ways. In the first place, instead of interpreting Being within the context of concrete experience, i.e., in the horizon of the fundamental datum "man-in-the-world," it assimilates it to one particular type of inner-worldly existence—to the status of those inanimate objects which we can inspect, handle, and use at will (*res, das Vorhandene*, in Heidegger's language). In the second place, mind is interpreted

with a one-sided emphasis on its rôle as a spectator placed outside and over against a world of objects, as the locus of *ideae* reflecting *res*, whereas its nature as an existent in the world is neglected. This physicalist-idealistic distortion is responsible for the vexatious puzzle as to how mind can affect bodies and *vice versa*.

With his conceptions of concrete experience and world (which imply the principle of metaphysical realism) and with his critique of Cartesian physicalism Heidegger takes a long step towards the recovery of fundamental metaphysical truth, and in that respect his work, in spite of the enormous difference of approach, bears comparison with that of Whitehead. But in order to become metaphysically fruitful the idea of man-in-the-world as the basic datum requires interpretation in the light of the hypothesis described as "ontological affirmation." The human perspective as determined by that concrete being which man is must be seen as analogously related to an absolute (divine) perspective for which the meaningful structure of reality is revealed as it is by itself, in other words, for which the human distinction between intrinsic rationality and intelligibility to us does not apply. Furthermore the human perspective is to be interpreted as being on the move towards assimilation, though at an infinite distance, to the absolute perspective, this move being "existential" in character, i.e. involving man as a concrete whole. This is another way of saying that the existential idea of love-inspired *theoria* (philosophy as a way of life) is required to hold the metaphysical scheme together. But at this juncture, Heidegger, committed as he is to ontological negation, breaks away from the straight path of metaphysical enquiry, and Sartre in his own way follows in the same direction.

"Knowledge is an existential mode of (man's) being-in-the-world," Heidegger formulates (*op. cit.* p. 61). But this admirable statement leads him to a disparagement of *theoria* as a gazing at, or even "gaping at," things which we remove from the sphere of practical relevance for the sake of an aimless inspection, i.e., out of curiosity (pp. 170-173). For *theoria* he substitutes an awareness animated by anxiety as the affective response to Nothingness. For he holds that through Nothing we gain an understanding of Being. "It is the permanent possibility of non-

Being, outside us and in us, that conditions our questions concerning Being," Sartre asserts (*op. cit.* p. 40).

The ontological interpretation based by Heidegger on ontological negation as a premise has so far remained a fragment. In addition it is of great complexity, and it is couched in a language obscured by an excessive confidence in the wisdom of the writer's native tongue. As we move in this sphere of forceful and untranslatable neologisms the suspicion, repeatedly voiced before, of the presence of parasitical elements in existential thought grows upon us with renewed strength. There is, for instance, the idea of man's essential guiltiness on which his conscience informs him. But guilt, in this case, has nothing to do with transgression nor is conscience a voice that warns us of our own wrongdoing. Guiltiness, in the language of meontology, is another expression for the nothingness (*Nichtigkeit*) which permeates human existence. Man's being is exclusion of all that he is not, a guilt which is to be redeemed not by repentance but by annihilation. His existence is essentially an existing towards death.

More interesting philosophically than the rather violent fusion of Kierkegaard's psychology of crisis with Nietzsche's affirmation of the finality of terrestrial life is the simple but ingenious device which underlies Heidegger's construction. It consists in interpreting the phenomenological concept of intentionality in the light of the Kierkegaardian idea of anxiety. Consciousness as "intentional" or "transcendent" is consciousness of something. *Dasein* (the mode of being which characterizes man), so Heidegger interprets this transcendence, is essentially a movement away from itself and beyond itself, a staying outside itself with the world; it is its own possibilities, an outrunning of itself and a projection of itself into what it is not, a continual flight from itself. The Being of *Dasein* is care (*Sorge*), a word that admirably serves the analyst's purpose because of its duality of meaning. On the one hand it expresses the active concern for and attachment to the object for which one cares. On the other hand, it conveys a reflexive meaning, the idea of a disquieted backwards glance upon one's own self, and with reference to the latter sense we speak of "careworn" or of a "consuming care." The world then appears as a unified and structured manifold of screens behind

which the self in anxiety seeks shelter against itself. In this manner ontological analysis becomes an unmasking of the self. By tracing the rise of Being out of Nothing the individual is forced into confrontation with Nothingness and thus brought in a position to actualize authentic selfhood by choosing himself. He sees through the surface aspects of the world and recognizes it for what it is: the deceptive projection of the anguished self onto Nothingness.

By using the idea of anguished projection (*Entwurf*) as ontological key-concept Heidegger seems to relapse into idealism. The parallel device used by Sartre consists in dialectically letting the "by-itself" (*le pour-soi*) of the ego as the locus of non-Being be pitted against the "in-itself" (*l'être-en-soi*) of the object. But by so following Hegel rather than Heidegger he lays himself open to the same objection. He also endangers the principle of realism which is at the basis of his construction.

Philosophy, in understanding the world, must try to understand itself as part of the world process. Existenz philosophy rightly insists on looking upon the philosophical process as an undertaking which concerns the whole personality of the one who engages in it. It is also right in calling our attention to an element of discontinuity in this process. It is not wholly continuous in its theoretical aspect, and this is why the ideas of a *primum abitrium* and of rational faith must be invoked. It is even less so under its practical aspect—the field where crisis in the full sense of the word—the crisis of sin and repentance—has its proper place.

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## THE NATURE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

### I. THE THREEFOLD DEMAND

A speculative account of any cosmological unit should satisfy three demands:

1. The doctrines must so far as possible exhibit a single principle.<sup>1</sup>
2. The doctrines must be consistent with one another, and with other established doctrines of the same system.<sup>2</sup>
3. The doctrines must be true to our fundamental, inescapable beliefs, implicit in all action, and dimly articulated in common sense.<sup>3</sup>

In setting out our account of the concrete individual, we shall try to satisfy these three demands, noting first of all the nature of the principle, of the doctrines taken as established, and of the common-sense beliefs which must be justified.

1. The Single Principle. The principle which we shall employ is the principle of *Transcendence-Inmanence*. This principle holds that whatever is immanent (in a character, or relation, or anything else) is at one and the same time necessarily transcendent; and that similarly the transcendent is at one and the same time necessarily immanent. This principle is not a contingent one, is neither confirmable nor deniable by future experience, and is nevertheless synthetic, material, and necessary. Its validity can be shown in two ways: directly, by an analysis of its meaning and possible alternatives, and indirectly by showing its fruitfulness in application. The entire discussion of this paper is such an indirect demonstration. To the direct demonstration we may now turn.

What does it mean that *A* is immanent in *B*? It means either that *A* is altogether identical with *B*, or not altogether identical. But if *A* were altogether identical with *B*, it could bear only a reflexive relation to *B*. But the relation of immanence is not a purely reflexive one. *A* must therefore not be altogether identical

with *B*. If this is the case *A* must be to some extent other than *B*, that is to say, transcend it. In order to be something for another, it is necessary to be something for oneself. A "pure appearance" is a figment of the sophisticated imagination.

What does it mean that *A* is transcendent of *B*? Does it mean that *A* is altogether different from *B*, or not? If it does mean that *A* is altogether different from *B*, then *A* could bear no relation to *B*, and therefore could not be in the same universe with it. But to compare it with *B* is to consider it in the same universe. Therefore *A* cannot be totally different from *B*. But so far as *A* is in the same universe with *B*, it is an item for *B*, is, to use Whitehead's language, "prehended" by *B*. It is therefore immanent in *B*.

It is a corollary of this analysis that if *A* is transcendent of, and immanent in *B*, *B* is similarly transcendent of and immanent in *A*, although in a different sense. I transcend my pinkish-white appearance, and am immanent in it. But on the other hand "pinkish-white appearance" transcends me, and yet is immanent in me. To be is to be something for oneself and other than everything else; and being something for oneself involves otherness from everything else.

Nothing can be purely immanent, for the purely immanent is without being of its own, and can therefore be nothing for that in which it is immanent. Nothing can be purely transcendent; for to be purely transcendent is to be other than another without being related to that other, and thus self-contradictorily what it is not for "otherness" too is a relation. Whatever is, is transcendent-immanent.

2. *The Established Doctrines.* We shall take it as established that there must be in the universe a plurality of complex beings.<sup>4</sup>

3. *The Demands of Common Sense.* To do justice to the *prima facie* empirical evidence we must admit that all substantial individuals have at least five main characteristics; for they are all *spatial*, *temporal*, *mobile*, *mutable*, and *empowered*. According to some philosophers such as Plotinus<sup>5</sup> the soul can be independent of the body, is simple, and is not spatial, or temporal. According to Zeno a man cannot move, and if he could, could not catch anything slower than himself that had a head start. According to Whitehead, nothing is mutable for everything

perishes at every instant.<sup>6</sup> According to Hume (in some places) nothing is empowered.<sup>7</sup> Yet despite these desperate conclusions, the common sense of man asserts itself (as Hume admits),<sup>8</sup> and we all act successfully on the supposition that individuals are as we have characterized them. We all know that a man's spirit can be broken by cracking his bones,<sup>9</sup> that he is better and worse at different times, that he can move and pass another, that he can grow and remain self-same, and that if he pushes another man hard enough he will knock him down. We recognize the first principle when we torture, the second when we love a naughty child, the third when we go to track meets, the fourth when we punish for a past misdeed, and the fifth when we pay for a ticket to a boxing match. The test of a metaphysic is action; if we cannot act as if what we hold to be true were in fact true, something is rotten in the state of our speculation.

All these demands can be met by invoking (although with important modifications to be noted) Paul Weiss' *Vectoral Theory of the Individual*. We shall try to show in the course of this paper that

- \* 1. The Vectoral theory embodies the principle of Transcendence-Immanence, and provides a ground for explaining why substantial beings are necessarily spatio-temporally related.
- 2. The Vectoral theory provides a ground for explaining why beings are complexes.
- 3. The Vectoral theory provides a ground for explaining why there are substantial individuals, and why they must be empowered, mutable, and mobile.

If we succeed in our endeavor to establish these three propositions we shall have satisfied in our account of the concrete individual the three methodological demands which we have noted.

#### THE VECTORAL THEORY OF THE INDIVIDUAL<sup>10</sup>

1. According to the Vectoral theory of the individual, an individual has a vectoral character in the sense that it overflows, spreading indefinitely outwards. Despite the use of the spatial metaphor, the vectorality is constitutive of space, and not vice-

versa. The generic vectoral character is expressed in diverse specifications, the principal ones being space and time. But in and of itself it is prior to both.

The individual is thus to be regarded as having a focal centre of maximum intensity, fading off through weaker intensities to an indefinitely extended region of minimum intensity. This indefinite region, which we shall follow Dr. Weiss in calling virtual, is the ground for the relatedness of individuals in the Universe.<sup>11</sup> We have shown in our previously cited article that space cannot be a container bringing isolate atoms together, and that the ground for relatedness between individuals must be in the individuals themselves. To do justice to the demand that the individual be at once transcendent of and immanent in its relatedness, we must acknowledge both the focal centre and the indefinite spread. Without the one we should have no actualities, and would be reduced to a relational system relating nothing; without the other we could not acknowledge that actualities were related and affected one another. Wherever a being is, in whatever part of the universe, it is related to every other being. This could only be the case if, like everything else, it spread out over the whole universe. The ground for the relatedness of beings to each other is therefore seen to be their vectoral character. It is as if all beings, like Plotinus' One, are the sources of emanations, overflowing over the whole universe. Each must overlap the other to some extent.

This account may seem to have the air of metaphor, and to be suspect in hard-headed analysis. This is true only because the highest genus is never definable in the ordinary way, and must always be understood in terms of its first specification. So the vectoral character of the individual, a character which must be acknowledged as soon as we recognize that the theory of the individual must explain it as transcendent-immanent, can best be expressed in terms of its first specification—spatiality. The inward and the outward, the overflow, the spreading out, all of these characteristics which are explained in spatial terms are so explained not in order to supplant precision with metaphor, but because vectorality is so generic as to be indefinable save in terms of its first specification.<sup>12</sup>

To explain the relatedness of individuals, it is necessary to

posit that individuals are at once indefinitely extended over the whole universe, and definitely intensified in a focal region of more than minimum intensity. This focal region defining the individual as actual is, in spatial terms, its size. The region of minimum intensity defining the individual as virtual is, in spatial terms, its indefinite extension, that is, the ground for its spatial relatedness to everything in the Universe.

When the virtual regions of two individuals overlap, they constitute a space. Thus, Dr. Weiss writes:

An individual is an idiosyncratic region spreading indefinitely outward from a region of maximum intensity—it is an extensive voluminous continuum of discontinuous and decreasing intensities. As virtual, the individual has a kind of penumbral "sense" or "direction" which though part of the actuality's essence, has a different locus from it. As actual the individual has mutually supplementary "senses" which enable it to have at once directions similar to that of its own and to that of any overlapping virtual regions, the multiplicity of complementary senses defining it as non-directional. The "sense" of its virtual region is the complement of any that overlaps it with an appropriate "sense" and intensity. Since all virtual regions have the same extensive spread, they must always overlap in their least intensive portions, and as all least intensities are not only commensurate with one another, but are analytic components of greater intensities, all overlapping virtual regions necessarily complement one another as minimum intensities, to constitute a non-directional extension of minimum intensity. That extension is a space intervening between actualities and serving as the minimum structure of the fact of their coexistence. Intervening space depends for its being on the overlapping and complementation of virtual regions, and as so constituted is an actuality continuous with the actual individuals it bounds and interrelates. It is the domain of relations of opposition and serves to keep individuals separate from one another.<sup>13</sup>

It is worth repeating, for Dr. Weiss has neglected to do so, that the apparently metaphorical character of such terms as "sense" and "direction" is unavoidable and does not vitiate

the clarity or precision of the exposition. Being already in space, and in a confused way understanding it, we have a vocabulary ready made. Were we to refuse to use it we should have to coin totally new words, indicating that they stand for the generic characters that are the grounds for the non-directional character of space.

So natural is the container view of space that this account appears at first paradoxical. Surely, it is held, since we can conceive of any individual as being removed from the space in which it is, we should be able to conceive of everything being removed and just the space remaining.

It is true that any individual can be removed, that no individual need necessarily occupy a given space at a given time. But it does not follow from this that every individual can be removed. For if every individual can be removed, there is no reason to suppose that the space which it is said to occupy cannot also be removed. But then we should acknowledge the possibility of absolute Non-Being, which is self-contradictory.<sup>14</sup> For there is no logical ground for arguing from the removability of anything to the removability of everything. When I say "No man is indispensable to the workings of government," I do not mean that government can be run without any human being, but only that the specific human beings who do run it now could be replaced. When I say that there is no time of the day at which one must eat, I do not mean that one can live without eating.

Every being is thus at once in itself, and in another. As in itself it is private, absolute, unrelated, having the character of a Leibnizian monad. However much I love you, I cannot be you. However much we think the same thoughts, they are still distinct, still my thoughts and your thoughts. But every being is also in another, being overlapped by another's virtual region, and therefore an item in public space, related to all others. The whole universe is nowhere, not for any paradoxical reason, but simply because it is in itself, and not in another. The demand for a space in which to locate space is an illegitimate one, not because an infinite regress is repugnant to a tidy mind, but because space is an abstraction from co-existing, extensive individuals, and so needs no space to occupy. Were the container theory of space true, space would need another space, and so on *ad infinitum*.

The embarrassment, as Bradley saw, is not that we have the infinite regress, but that we never have a real space relating its occupants. Spatial relations, like all others, must have their ground in the *relata*, or not be relations at all. The vectoral theory of the individual explains not only the fact of space, but also the fact that a uniform space is differently intensified, or more correctly, that different spaces contain as an analytic derivate, uniform unstressed space, constituted by the complementary character of the individual's virtual regions of least intensity.<sup>15</sup>

As having opposite "senses" from each other, individuals are spatially related, that is to say contemporary. These opposite "senses" complement one another, and therefore constitute a non-directional space at once uniting and keeping distinct the individuals which give rise to it. But individuals do not only have opposed "senses;" they are also united through the medium of similarly directed "senses," i.e. are at once directional as well as non-directional. The individuals as having similar senses are at once united and separated by a directional extension, that is to say by Time.<sup>16</sup> Individuals are in time, not because Time is a container, but because their virtual regions are similar as well as being complementary. The individual as actual, is present. As virtual, needing other beings in order to be, it must strive to be complete, and thus has an abstract future, a future defined by the totality of what there is available for the being, and which it (to use Whiteheadian language) "prehends" through the medium of the virtual region.<sup>17</sup> As being the terminus of the virtual regions of other actualities, a being has an abstract past. It is thus actually present, and abstractly past and abstractly future at every moment of time.

The process of moving into the future is the process of occupying a portion of the temporal extension intervening between the being and other actualities, a portion constituted by the intervening of virtual regions.<sup>18</sup> The actual future is not yet, nor is it the abstract future waiting for actualization as Bradley's spurious tissue of universals would wait (in a non-Bradleyan world) for the spirit of individuality to enliven them. The abstract future, as actualized, is present, for the very meaning of presentness is actuality. The abstract future is nothing but a realm of possibility, not of logical possibility alone, but of that selection

from logical possibility that is metaphysical possibility, a possibility defined by the nature of the actualities now present.<sup>19</sup> The actual future is thus to the abstract future what the present, determinate, and actual, is to the timeless, the indeterminate and the possible.

To be in time is thus not an accident of the individual, but is its very meaning when construed as vectoral, that is to say, as at once actual and virtual. Virtuality, or potentiality, is as much a necessary aspect of the real as actuality, defining each being as temporal. To be is to be incomplete, at once actual and virtual not in the sense that actuality and virtuality are characteristics separable in fact, but in the sense that they are analytic aspects inseparably together in all realities.

Time passes because beings strive to be fully actual; but since none can achieve this state, Time cannot have a stop.<sup>20</sup> Yet, the whole of time, just as the whole of space, is not anywhere in time or space, again not for any paradoxical reason, but simply because it is an abstraction from concrete, pulsating individuals. Taken as having a being of its own it may be regarded as the matrix for the passage of the individuals. It can be so regarded, however, only if it is made quite clear that it is not an isolate container irrelevant to the individuals, but is rather ingredient in them as an analytic aspect. Just as in a sense men make the laws, and yet the laws are the matrix for their community development, making it possible, so individuals make time, and yet in a sense need time in order to be.

In terms of the vectoral theory of the individual, temporality is a necessary feature of each individual as at once actual and virtual. To advance in time, the individual must release his hold upon that region which defines him as actual, and then move on to occupy another.

Up to this point, we have followed closely Dr. Weiss' analysis. But we must now diverge from it, for Dr. Weiss holds that a being as actual may, instead of occupying another region, reoccupy the same region, which reoccupation would define it as being at rest.<sup>21</sup> We cannot accept this doctrine of re-occupation, because it leads to an inescapable dilemma, which can be thus set out: If an actuality reoccupies the same region, it must be

either (a) altogether the same as it was, or (b) not altogether the same as it was.

a. It cannot be altogether the same as it was, for if it were, it would be totally indistinguishable from what it was. But it must be distinguishable, for it exists at a different time. We must therefore admit that it is not altogether the same.

b. If it is not altogether the same as what it was, it must differ from what it was either as virtual or as actual. Yet, if it occupies the same region, it cannot differ from what it was either as virtual or as actual. For as virtual it is a constant;<sup>22</sup> and as actual it is of the same intensity as it was, having assimilated nothing from the environment (if it had assimilated anything it would have grown and thus occupied a different region). The supposition that a being reoccupies a region must therefore be rejected, for it self-contradictorily supposes that such a being is and is not altogether the same as what it was.

### III. COMPLEX UNITIES

2. We have shown that the Vectoral theory of the individual embodies the principle of Transcendence-Immanence, and provides a ground for explaining why substantial beings are necessarily spatio-temporally related. We must now show that the Vectoral theory provides a ground for explaining why beings are complex. In order to do this we must examine the nature of entities that are not and are substantial individuals, and among the latter those that are divisibles and those that are indivisibles.<sup>23</sup>

#### i. Insubstantial Complexes

Insubstantial complexes are, as Dr. Weiss has indicated, of two kinds, conceptual unities and wholes.<sup>24</sup> A *conceptual unity* is any aggregate of individuals related by a minimal uniform space, the intensity of which is less than the intensity of any of the parts. So The King of Siam, an electron in the moon, and the Royal Palace at Windsor form together an aggregate that is merely a conceptual unity. A *Whole*, on the other hand, is an aggregate of individuals related by a more than minimal intervening space, whose intensity however, though possibly less, is never more than equal to that of its components. Thus water, stones, tables, are all wholes. Were they to be merely conceptual

unities they could not have distinctive properties of their own, and be the subject of study (the geological study of rocks is more than the physics of the electrons which form it). Were they individuals, they would have an initiatory power of their own (so that we might expect to find water occasionally flowing uphill).

The space of wholes may be, as we have said, either less intense than or equally as intense as that of the beings in which it terminates. If it is equally as intense, we may say that it is the space of a *society*.<sup>25</sup>

A being of a given intensity has, at its focal centre, actuality; but when it is in a society it has also, as virtual, actuality. But the two kinds of actuality must differ in some way, for if they did not the being would be identical in its privacy with the whole society. They do differ, in that the actuality of the virtual region is a *subordinate actuality*, constituted by and in no way possessing the beings in which it terminates, and thus without a privacy of its own.

The actuality of a virtual region, not of greater intensity than the beings in which it terminates, is an actuality that is dependent upon those beings, in a way in which they are not dependent on it. For they have an inwardness of their own, which is expressed in their being actual-and-virtual. But their virtual regions, even if of an intensity equal to their own as actual, are not individuals who are actual-and-virtual.

A being in a society is thus actual at its focal centre, and subordinately actual in the portion of its virtual region terminating in other members of the society. Because it is *actual* in a part of its virtual region, that part becomes integral to it in its privacy. Thus the welfare of the society is essential to a social being, for there is a sense in which it is the society. But because the social being is only *subordinately* actual in that part of its virtual region, that part is not permanently integral to it in its privacy. For if either it or other members of the society change in character, that part may lose the intensity that made it subordinately actual. Thus it is that a close knit family, which is a society, can break up; for the members may go their own ways, and cease to complement each other in the ways necessary to

ensure the existence of a society. The society itself has no control over them, and cannot prevent them from becoming asocial.

So long as a being is in a society, it is subordinately actual in a portion of its virtual region, and that portion is integral to it in its privacy. But since a being may alter in character, or be grouped with others who alter their character, it may become asocial. This process the society itself (we are not speaking of some of its members but of the society taken as an entity) can do nothing to alter. In order to hold beings together in a space, it is necessary to be a divisible individual.

## ii. Divisible Individuals<sup>26</sup>

A divisible individual, must, if it is to be an individual, have power. Its intensity must be greater than that of its component parts, so that in a sense it may be said to possess them, not only by limiting them (as a whole does) but also by making them do things of which otherwise they would be incapable. When I walk upstairs my body is doing what no body not contained in a supervening individual could do. When someone pushes my body in one way, I may yet make it go another. When I die, my body is merely a whole, incapable of the activity that it performs when possessed by me as living and supervening over my cells.

The mystery of life can be most accurately formulated in the question, "What is the nature of supervention, and how does a supervening individual intensify and relate its parts?"

The clue to our answer is the fact that all individuals must be bounded with respect to each other. If they are outside each other, neither possesses the boundary between them. But if one is included in the other, it is because the supervening individual not only shares, but also possesses the boundary.<sup>27</sup> If it did not share at all it could not be influenced by its components—but then I would not die when my heart was pierced. If it did not possess the boundary, it could not modify its components, but then my heart would not beat faster when I ran. The relation I have to my parts is analogous to that which the "absolute" king has to his subjects. He controls them, makes them do things they might not want to do, but he still depends on them for his being and his power. It is by the neglect of a thorough understanding

of the nature of power and of the possessed boundary that many men in high position have fallen into the dust. Just as a King without subjects would be no King, and consequently must protect and preserve them to be a King, so would a man be no man without a body, and thus must perforce preserve it, even though he despise it.

A divisible individual is then an individual supervening over others, that is, possessing and sharing the boundary between them. Yet a divisible individual must be more than this, for if it were not, the tyrant and the lover could be held to supervene over their subjects and beloveds; but we do not mean to say this. There is a difference between my relation to my body, and to my beloved. This difference Dr. Weiss has failed to make evident, but it must be insisted upon and accounted for.

To supervene is at once to possess and share a boundary, and to vivify the same space as that which is possessed. This latter characteristic is analogous, in political terms, to the culture (used in the contemporary anthropological sense). The culture of the United States is nowhere outside individual Americans; it has no independent being or power. Yet it is ingredient in them, for were it not to be, they would differ in their characters. Culture is thus identical with the individuals in locus, but different in being.<sup>28</sup> The absolute king is identical in kind of being with his subjects but different in locus. It is the essence of the supervening individual that it be identical with its components both in kind of being (it is a concrete individual just as are its components), and in locus (the legend of the giant's soul inhabiting a tree is only a legend).

The problem of the related individual is thus seen to be not a single, but a twofold one. It is not only immanent in its characteristics, but also immanent in real constituent parts. To explain how it is immanent in its characteristics, we must recognize that its characters are the result of the overlapping of virtual regions constituting a public world. A character of an individual is that individual as having a definite aspect when viewed in a definite way. The brownness of the table is integral to it in the sense that it is what the table is in a defined public setting.

Perhaps the most brilliant account of this situation is given in

Whitehead's theory of feelings.<sup>29</sup> In his terminology, a being that for itself is actually undivided, is, in its character as an object for others, divisible, that is to say has numerous aspects which are data for the prehensions of other beings. What I prehend is a proposition, an aspect of the being which I recognise to be merely an aspect, and therefore ingredient in a more concrete real. But if the aspect is truly an aspect, then the proposition is conformal, and when expressed as a judgment is true. Finite truth, which idealists hold to be impossible, depends then upon the metaphysics of private beings being also objects for each other's prehensions and as objects divisible into aspects.<sup>30</sup>

The epistemological difficulty of partial truth, and of the recognition of concrete individuals as the substantial correlate of judgments, is thus cleared up by a careful explication of the ontological situation. This explication should be the correlate of a purely epistemological account, an account which Whitehead himself does not furnish.<sup>31</sup>

But we are still left with the problem of what to do, not with aspects, but with real elements, and here we find little help from Whitehead, whose metaphysics is grounded in the denial of what he failed to explain. We cannot stress too much the importance of differentiating between these two problems, for they are usually freely confused. The first problem is the problem of how the same being can present a brown surface in the day, and a black one in the night; the second problem is how a unitary being can be made up of other beings, each having a being of their own.

This second problem has a long and ancient history, but has usually been discussed in terms of its specification in human psychology. Rather than ask the generic question concerning all beings, most philosophers have wrestled rather with the problem in its most obvious and pressing specification, the relation of soul to body. Provided we remember it to be a specification there are advantages in following in the fashion.<sup>32</sup>

In the *Phaedo* of Plato we find the first systematic account of a materialist (strictly speaking an epiphenomenalist) approach to the problem, when Simmias suggests that the soul is a mere harmony of the body. Plato's classic refutation of this doctrine is well known and does not require lengthy repetition. An at-

tunement is a function of what is attuned, but the essence of a soul is that it is active and more than a function.<sup>33</sup>

Plato therefore substitutes a doctrine of the immaterial soul, already complete, needing no body.<sup>34</sup> But then why does it have a body? The series of elaborate myths which Plato develops fail to account for the difficulty. It is evident that they should, for, as we have pointed out earlier, the fate of the soul is clearly linked with the body.

To explain how the soul and body are interrelated, and why they require one another (or generically how a supervening individual supervenes over its components, and why it and its components need one another), we must explain both why the body has a soul, and why the soul has a body. Any account that fails to do justice to this double character of the question is necessarily incomplete. Despite the inadequacies of his analysis, the materials for the solution of the first aspect, why the body needs a soul, are worked out by Whitehead.<sup>35</sup>

These materials consist of two doctrines to be found in *Process and Reality*, the doctrine of the subject-superject, and the doctrine of life. According to the doctrine of the subject-superject, the substantial individual, Whitehead's *actual occasion*, has a double character, being at once the immanent reason or final cause of its own concrescence, as well as the result of the concrescence, the total atomic fact.<sup>36</sup> As the final cause of its own concrescence, it is in Whitehead's terms the subject, in our terms the transcendent, for it is what it is without reference to what the environment is. As the result of the concrescence it is the superject, in our terms, the immanent, being what it is partly because of what it has striven to be, and partly because of what the environment is. Translated into the language of human psychology, a man is at once a being striving to control his mind and body, and a being constituted by that mind and body. When I say of myself that I want to be good, the I who am wanting to be good, who recognize myself as transcending my present wickedness, am the very I that is now wicked. Thus the account appears to be valid, yet it falls short. For Whitehead has really only succeeded in pointing out but not yet in explaining properly the transcendence-immanence situation. "Sub-

"ject-superject" is apparently only a verbal alternative to "transcendent-immanent."

According to Whitehead's doctrine of life, life exists only in the interstices between actual inorganic units.<sup>37</sup> In Whitehead's terms, an "entirely living" nexus is never a society, for it requires for its protection the inorganic.<sup>38</sup> Yet if this is the case, it becomes evident that the entirely living nexus can not be corpuscular (i.e. made up of inorganic units), for on the one hand the relation of inclusion would not apply, and on the other hand the dependence on the inorganic would not be necessary. By becoming a body, a soul would cease to need a body, but would also cease to be a soul. On the contrary, Whitehead holds, a living cell is not the matter of the cell plus some other matter strangely without weight. It is matter which has, in his words, a "mental pole," capable of originality in meeting the environment.<sup>39</sup> Yet the soul cannot be totally different from the body, for then it would not affect it. Whitehead therefore locates life in the interstices between corpuscular beings. In his own words:

The conclusion to be drawn from this argument is that life is a characteristic of 'empty space' and not of space 'occupied' by any corpuscular society. In the nexus of living occasions there is a certain social deficiency. Life lurks in the interstices of each living cell, and in the interstices of the brain."<sup>40</sup>

This location of life in the interstices is in Whitehead's own metaphysics not adequately explained. But if we turn to our own vectoral theory, we can see the truth of his analysis, so far as it goes. According to this theory an individual is an indefinite spread characterized by a focal region which defines it as actual, and by a virtual region spreading out from a less than maximum to a minimum intensity. In these terms there is life when two or more beings are related through the medium of complementary virtual regions of more than minimum intensity, and the space thus constituted is more intensified than the space of any of the related beings as actual. But we have seen already that a supervening individual exists when its parts are related by a space more intense than themselves. An organism can thus be defined as a spatial region, so intense that it is itself an individual, interrelating an aggregate of individuals who are of less

intensity than the space, and who are constitutive of and yet possessed by it.

Let us take an example. Suppose there are two individuals, each with a maximum intensity of 100. It is as thus maximally intense that they are actual. Let us then suppose that the portions of their virtual regions nearest to them have an intensity of 80. Now if these virtual regions are complementary in the fullest sense, the "intervening space" has an intensity greater than 100, and is thus a portion of space sufficiently vivified to be regarded as an actuality.<sup>41</sup> As an actuality it will have *its own virtual region*, and will thus be spatial, temporal, and empowered. Being more intense than the two original individuals it will possess the boundary between itself and them.<sup>42</sup>

With the aid of such a doctrine many subtle and difficult problems can be cleared up. Birth, hitherto to some extent empirically explicable but always perplexing as a metaphysical phenomenon, can be understood as the coming together of cells whose virtual regions are complementary, and which overlap with sufficient intensity to create a new actuality. Mutilation can be understood as the loss of intensity not sufficient to deprive the supervening actuality of what it needs to survive. Death can be understood as just such a sufficient loss of intensity. The hitherto metaphysically inexplicable distinction between vital and non-vital organs becomes intelligible. The vital organs are those which contribute enough intensity to the supervening actuality to make the withdrawal of that intensity fatal. The non-vital organs do not so contribute.<sup>43</sup> We can see thus why a lesion in the brain can affect the mind, without having to equate brain and mind, and why a wave length can be associated with a color without being that color.<sup>44</sup>

Yet for all the appropriateness which I believe it has, this account, which perhaps would be a satisfactory metaphysic for biologists, is not complete in itself, being one-sided. For it only answers the question "Why the body has a soul?" and fails to tackle the equally important question (the other side of the first) "Why a soul has a body?"<sup>45</sup> Although in a sense two sides of the same question, both sides must be taken into account. For in answering the first we have shown perhaps only how a body can be organized in a way more fundamental than the way

in which a table is organized; how, in fact, the soul is immanent, in Whitehead's terms the superject. We must show also how the soul nevertheless has its own private nature, how it is transcendent, in Whitehead's terms the subject. To do this we must approach the question from the other side and ask, as we have said, "Why the soul has a body?"

The soul (it must be remembered here that we are using the specific term "soul" as equivalent to the generic "supervening individual") is a being of intensity greater than that which marks the indivisible; for were it not to have that greater intensity, it would be an indivisible.<sup>46</sup> But to be more intense is to be able to act in multiple ways impossible to an indivisible of minimum intensity necessary for actuality. And to act is to be in the public world, related to all other beings. It follows therefore that whatever indivisibles are in the field of the soul's actuality must interact with it, and being weaker than it, must have their boundaries possessed as well as shared. The soul thus must have a body so long as it lives, for to live is to act and interact, and in the case of a soul to possess. A soul may possess the boundaries of other souls, but it need not; whereas it must possess its body, being by definition stronger than the indivisibles which form its body. When it ceases to do this, it has ceased to be a soul, being of equal intensity to the other indivisibles. A dead soul is nothing but a cell.

The soul must possess the boundaries of its bodily components, whether it will or no, so long as it remain a soul. Its very strength is at once its weakness, for the glory that is the soul's is made possible only because there are bodies to possess, just as the glory of the tyrant depends upon there being commoners to be his cannon fodder. This is why the soul must care for its body, and nurture it. There is a sense therefore in which the Socrates of the *Phaedo* is at once right and wrong. It is the essence of the soul that it strives to master and thus be independent of its body; and yet it is also the essence of the soul that it care for its body. These two aspects are not different portions of the soul's activity, but two sides of the same activity. The apparent paradox is no paradox at all; for as it is the nature of the transcendent also to be immanent and of the immanent also to be transcendent, so it is the nature of the soul to be

other than its body, and yet be expressed through its body. This apparent paradox, which Plato understands so well in its political dimension when he realizes that the king, in order to be most a king, must look after his subjects, he fails to understand in the domain of psychology.<sup>47</sup> The result is well known; faced with the question, "Why then, do not men commit suicide?" Socrates must call upon the gods for an arbitrary decree to help him out of his embarrassment.<sup>48</sup>

The Whiteheadian account is really an account of why the body has a soul; the Platonic account is of the transcendence of the soul. They can be reconciled. If we modify the Platonic doctrine of pure transcendence, to transcendence as well as, and because of, immanence, we complement the Whiteheadian account and show why the soul has a body. Being of greater intensity than its bodily components, the soul must possess its body; but the very intensity which is the soul's is derived from the contributions which its body makes. Inasmuch as it is the intensity, and not the specific character of the components that a soul needs, it can dispense with this bodily content or that, but not with *some* bodily content or other. That is why we do not change our calcium and phosphorous for nothing, but for other (and when we are growing) more calcium and phosphorous. Inasmuch as a specific body is now contributing to the intensity, sudden removal of a part of it without time for replacement can be fatal. It is the characteristic of the soul, as Whitehead points out, that it requires food; and it is evident that this be so, for the normal wear and tear of daily life decreases the intensity of the body which the soul needs; and so it must compensate for this loss, a compensation which we call food. Life, as Whitehead also points out, is in its essence robbery.<sup>49</sup> To be successfully alive it is necessary to have replacements; which proposition all tyrants understand.

The soul needs a body, then, we may say, because it is from the body that it derives the intensity it needs to be a soul; but having a private nature, a substantiality of its own, it is irrelevant to it what the specific components of its body are, so long as they supply the requisite intensity. We can kill a man by stopping his heart; but there is no metaphysical barrier to the invention of a mechanical heart that will preserve life, even when the original

one has been lost. So long as it has the food it needs, it lives; when it fails to get that food, it dies, losing the intensity that defines it as a soul. There are thus, as Plato remarked in the *Phaedo*, strictly speaking no dead souls; for a "dead soul" is a contradiction in terms.<sup>50</sup>

### iii. Indivisibles

We must then, as we have seen, following Dr. Weiss's account, insist with Aristotle and common sense, against Democritus and Whitehead, that there are divisible individuals. But as against Aristotle, and with Democritus and Whitehead, we must insist that there are indivisibles. For were a divisible individual to be actually infinitely divisible, we should have to admit with Zeno that it was either without magnitude or infinitely great. To say that it is, as Aristotle holds, *potentially* divisible, begs the question.<sup>51</sup> For what one is potentially one may be actually.

We must acknowledge that there are indivisibles, without contending that a divisible is nothing but the sum of the indivisibles. Put into different terms, we must say that when indivisibles are part of a supervening individual, their boundaries are possessed, and so they make up more than an aggregate. But that there are indivisibles is made evident when we recognize that were there none each organic individual would have to have the character of the Bradleyan whole without real parts, a doctrine which is no more acceptable when held of multiple beings than when held of one. The result is that we must acknowledge, as Dr. Weiss insists, that there is a principle of indeterminacy in ontology: "the isolate nature of a contained individual is not determinate prior to the very act of division which separates it from its supervening individual, and the nature of the contained individual is not determinate prior to the very act of incorporation which deprives it of an independent status."<sup>52</sup>

It may be objected that although we have avoided, in our doctrine of the supervening individual, the pitfall of the determinately indeterminate bare one, we have done so only to fall into it all over again in the case of the indivisible. Surely the indivisible is nothing but a supervening individual supervening over nothing (a doctrine that was held to be self-contradictory). Dr. Weiss unintentionally gives strength to this objection in his

account of the matter when he speaks of the function of supervening individuals being "fulfilled vacuously by any irreducible, indivisible individual."<sup>58</sup> The objection is met in the doctrine of the boundary, and in the doctrine of the vectoral character of the individual; the indivisible may be said to be determinate inasmuch as it contrasts with its own virtual region, and is to this extent a "whole-of-parts" in the sense required by our theory. This becomes evident when the indivisible's boundary is possessed by a supervening individual; for then, if sundered from that individual, it will lose the component which it contributed to the boundary.

We have thus, in terms of the Vectoral Theory of the Individual, explained the nature and *raison d'être* of complex individuals, and thus established the second proposition, to the effect that the Vectoral theory provides a ground for explaining why beings are complexes. We must now establish the third proposition.

#### IV. SUBSTANTIAL INDIVIDUALS—THEIR REASON AND CHARACTER

3. Our final task in this paper is to show that the Vectoral theory provides a ground for explaining why there are substantial beings, and why they must be empowered, mobile, and mutable.

##### i. The Individual as Substantial and Empowered

We can define the substantial as that which is empowered. We must therefore analyze the notion of power, to determine whether a being defined as vectoral in character must be empowered. If it must be empowered then, by definition, it must be substantial.

It is especially necessary that we analyze the notion of power, for in ordinary usage it is such as to characterize not only substantial individuals, but also, for example, concepts. It may be said truly that concepts such as triangularity have power in the normal sense, since they can and do influence us. Were we not to be influenced by them, we should be incapable of reasoning correctly; for it is only in submitting, as it were,

to the forms imposed upon us that we are able to say of a triangle that its angles equal 180 degrees, and that it must be either isosceles, scalene, or equilateral. Even a mere conceptual unity, such as the aggregate of the King of Siam, an electron in the moon, and the Royal Palace at Windsor, has formal properties that constrain us so far as we think truly of it.

But we must examine carefully what is involved in power in the fullness of its meaning, for if we do we shall see that the result of such an examination, a careful definition, will make evident why only substantial individuals may truly be said to possess power.

The notion of power contains within itself two diverse, but related, notions. The first of these is the notion of effort. The second is the notion of potentiality or possibility. To be powerful a being must at once initiate and exert activity, and be able to be in the future what it is not now, remaining always self-identical, must be in short actual and virtual. But to be actual and virtual is to be vectoral in character. The vectoral theory therefore provides a ground for explaining why beings are substantial, i.e. empowered.

A substantial individual can initiate activity, that is to say, can and must act in order to cope with the world which is its environment. But though concepts do influence us, they do not initiate their influential activity; they must wait, so to speak, until they are called on to do work. I and an electron both wander about the universe, but concepts do not; they are what they are and remain constant, awaiting the activity of a substantial being in order to have meaningful possibilities.

It is the essence of an empowered being, that it can not only act to modify others but also itself, for power involves potentiality. It is clear that a concept is a constant and does not change through time, being incapable of alteration. A triangle for Euclid is a triangle for us, and were it not to be we and Euclid would be unable to talk about the same thing.

Why is the substantial individual the expressor of effort and the possessor of potentialities? In each case the answer is the same—because to be is to be incomplete, and yet to need completion. The fact of being at all insures that whatever is, is actual; the impossibility of being absolute insures that whatever

is, is virtual. To be at once actual and virtual is to have potentialities, for the virtual is that which may be actualized. To be actual and virtual is to be that which exerts effort, striving to make itself complete, i.e., fully to actualize itself. All beings strive to be complete, yet all are doomed to failure.

## ii. The Individual as Mobile and Mutable

It has sometimes been held that the explanation of motion is simpler than the explanation of change. Further, it has sometimes even been taken for granted that motion is a natural ultimate and that there is therefore no necessity for explaining it. This is the position taken by the Atomists and severly criticized by Aristotle,<sup>54</sup> but it is evident that only a container theory of space and time would justify the view of motion as a simple ultimate, radically different from change. Once this theory is, as it must be, denied, we recognize with Aristotle that motion and change are both generically the same and that both require a single explanation in terms of the beings which move and change.<sup>55</sup>

As the Idealists have shown, I am not the same as I was when I am in a different place, for (as is universally recognized) this is true of me when I have changed. But as is not always recognized, motion and change in the narrow sense differ only as species of a genus. Both involve generic change, which is the alteration of the relation between a constant spread and varying intensifications, so that the same thing is at one time different from what it is at another time.

Because they held the notion of generic change to be an absurdity, the Eleatics developed their doctrine of the stationary universe. *Prima facie* it is apparently self-contradictory to suppose that a being should be at once identical and not identical with itself. So serious is this difficulty that it has led others besides the Eleatics to desperate conclusions. Whitehead, too, following Descartes, denies real change substituting a doctrine of perpetual perishing that says in effect that in each moment of time the universe is altogether new.<sup>56</sup> The Atomists are equally in difficulty for they insist on a plurality of self-contained atoms moving for no apparent reason; but if no reason is needed for the explanation of motion none presumably is needed for change.

so that the Atomistic assertion of the one and denial of the other are equally ungrounded. Aristotle attempted to justify what he knew must be justified, but brilliant though the effort was, it was shown by subsequent criticism to fail. It is the task of a contemporary philosophy to try, in the light of significant criticism, to reconstruct the doctrine of substantial change.

The theory of substantial change requires an identity in difference over time. This identity in difference can be accounted for with the aid of the vectoral theory of the individual. According to the theory, the entire universe is covered by each vectoral region, which constitutes also the whole of time. A changing individual is one which is constant in its uniform extensive spread but may differ from moment to moment in its intensification of a portion of that spread.

A changing individual, is a temporal nexus of actualities, each of these actualities objectively immortal in the next. But, being more than a society, an individual is more than merely this nexus. It is this nexus as intensifying, from moment to moment, the same virtual region, uniquely defined by it, and constituting the whole of its private time. The unity of a changing individual is the unity of a constant matrix variously intensified. Motion is nothing but the simplest kind of change, in which the alteration of the individual's spatio-temporal public relatedness depends, apart from the action of others, upon its being characterized by an actualization different in locus but identical in intensity from one moment to the other.

I am identical with myself at all times because of the eternal character of the whole of my private time, that is to say of my total spread as viewed apart from any actualization of it. Yet since this spread is an abstraction from the succession of concrete states of spread-characterized-by-localized-intensive-actuality, I also differ from myself from moment to moment. The paradox of identity-in-difference is resolved by the interpretation of myself as conforming to the vectoral theory of the individual.

### iii. Summary

In thus establishing that beings are substantial, because vectoral in character, and are therefore empowered, imobile, and mutable, we have established the third proposition which we held to be

essential to a correct account of the nature of the concrete individual. We have thus (having already established the other two propositions) shown that the Vectoral theory of the individual provides such a correct account. We have not considered the problem of the relation of finite individuals to a possibly greater Being supervening over them. But that is another problem for another day.

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#### NOTES

1. Cf. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, tr. W. H. Johnson and L. G. Struthers, London, 1929, I, pp. 53-92. The exhibition of a single principle is desirable for two reasons: a. the element of the arbitrary (which with Whitehead—see *Science and the Modern World*, New York, 1946, p. 135—and against Hegel we should recognize) in all explanation is lessened; and b. insofar as the same thing is explained by more than one principle, those principles have something in common (the same thing exhibits them). But if they have something in common, then there must be a higher principle in terms of which they are explicable.

2. We shall treat the following as an established doctrine: *that all beings are complexes, i.e., wholes made up of parts, and that there are no simple unities.* For the justification of this doctrine, cf. this author's, "The Method of Ambiguity," *The New Scholasticism*, XXI (1947), pp. 154-191. In this article it is shown that Plato is correct in denying that a bare one (a simple unity) can exist.

3. The role of common sense in serious thought is not to supply an understanding of *why* something is, but only *that* it is. But *that* some things are must be recognized. A metaphysic that denies motion does not even provide a place for the metaphysician who walks; so that every time he does walk, he is insisting that his metaphysic makes no sense. Thus the beliefs that are implied by his actions are the beliefs which a man really holds. The beliefs that are implied by the action that he cannot avoid are the beliefs which a man *must* hold. He who affirms God's rule and stuffs his pockets indicates his real belief in the value of stuffing. He who denies Time before he sleeps and after he wakes affirms by his denial a belief in what he has denied. It is from this latter group of actions that the raw material for philosophical speculation is provided. An adequate metaphysic must articulate and explain the truths which every man acknowledges in every activity in which he engages.

4. Cf. above note 2.

5. Plotinus, "On the Nature of the Soul" tr. Stephen Mackenna, London: The Medici Society, 1924; [A translation of the 4th Ennead.] A collection of neo-Platonic utterances on the nature of the soul is made by E. R. Dodds in *Select Passages Illustrating Neo-Platonism*, London, 1923, pp. 74-92.

6. Cf. *Process and Reality*, pp. 43, 94.

7. Cf. *The Treatise of Human Nature*, Part III, Section xiv.

8. In the Appendix to the *Treatise*, which perhaps ranks second only to the *Parmenides* as an example of philosophical self-criticism.

9. We do not mean that all men break under torture, but only that some do, and all may.

10. This account largely follows Dr. Weiss' in *Reality*, Princeton, 1938, wherever it does the fact is indicated by references to the relevant passages in that work. We have insisted however upon a modification of Dr. Weiss' theory of Time, a modification that is of fundamental importance. Cf. pp. 91-3 below.

11. "The indefinite spread of individuals is a vectoral extension divisible into subsidiary extensions, each of which vectorally relates and is related by other vectoral portions. The entire vectoral extensive spread of an individual is not of equal intensity throughout, for then the individual would be as wide as the universe, an entity of unlimited extent, every portion of which was as actual as every other. Such a supposition would violate the fact that an individual, though of unlimited spread, has an actual limited magnitude or size. Since an individual has a definite size, and since the possibility that it enter into extensive relations with others necessitates the recognition of its indefinitely extended vectoral spread, a distinction must be made between the individual as limited and as indefinitely extended. And in view of the fact that coexistent individuals, upon approach, sometimes discontinuously and suddenly give rise to relational situations with new properties, and that any two of them always have a relation of extensive co-presence to one another, the individual as *real* must be described as not only having a focal extensive region of maximum intensity which is the individual as localized and vital—but as fading off through a discontinuous series of extensive weaker intensities into an indefinitely extended region of minimum intensity—which is the individual as indefinite and referential. The focal region of maximum intensity is the individual as *actual*, here and now, a single being, each part of which is coexistent, because equally vivid, with each other. The rest of the individual is merely *virtual*, the ground for the relations which terminate in the individual as actual; it is the actual individual as outside itself in the shape of an extensively ordered series of intensities, pointing to other actualities beyond; a mark of the fact that the actuality is contingent and incomplete, incapable of standing entirely alone. The individual is actual and spatio-temporal in the region of its maximum intensity, and virtual and sequentially less intensive in the rest. As virtual it is entirely private, but as actual it is at once private and public. Accordingly, as actual it not only possesses a public magnitude and lives through a period of public time, but has a monadic internal spatial and temporal extent." *Reality*, pp. 182-3. This doctrine that an individual is in some sense everywhere, and is particularly there where his influence is felt, is not as outrageously peculiar as it may first appear. In everyday social relations, we all know that a man extends far beyond his skin. To the lover his beloved, and to the criminal his executioner are at all times very close. This "closeness" cannot be merely metaphorical, for if it were we should have to acknowledge an absurd doctrine of the nature of influence.

12. Dr. Weiss does however define "extension" non-spatially. "An extension is any element which functions at once as a connection and as an entity connected by what it connects, while any extensive relation is a specification of some such extension and, as so specific, connects elements which do not connect it." *Reality*, p. 182. It would be possible also, to define other "spatial" terms with the aid of logical notions such as asymmetry (cf. in this connection, *Reality* pp. 219 ff. where temporal relations are thus defined). The most difficult notion to define, because the most central, is that of "intensity." It corresponds, in Dr. Weiss' usage which we are following, to terms such as "cosmic energy," "fullness of being," etc. Its meaning is evident when we say of a poetic beggar like François Villon that he led a more "intense" life than did most of his compatriots. If, however, a strict definition is required, we may (as Dr. Weiss has suggested to me) say that *X* is more intense than *Y* means that if from *X* is abstracted a quality *Z*, *X* will equal *Y*. Alternatively we may say that *X* is more intense than *Y* means *X* is equal to *Y* plus *Z*, where *Z* is a quality, and the "plus" is an infectious "plus." Cf. *Reality* p. 135, 'The 'and' of internal modification, however, is the 'and' of intensional logic, an 'and' which expresses the fact that terms infect one another to constitute a unity in which

one of them, at least, is not to be found. When cream is mixed with coffee, the 'and' uniting the taste of them is infectious, not external. The taste of them together is a new entity, possessed of consequences which would not follow were the tastes kept apart by a supplementary 'and' "

13. *Reality*, p. 186.

14. For the demonstration of the impossibility of absolute Non-Being, cf. *Reality*, pp. 165-6.

15. Cf. *Reality*, pp. 185-95.

16. Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 218-31.

17. The basic cosmological fact for Whitehead is the concrete togetherness of actualities. Whatever may be true of the Universe is true because of what the actualities are. Being unique and together, the actualities are contrasted. A contrast is the particular and definite way in which two objects exist. When an actuality is an object for another, the second actuality is said to be "prehending" the first. Prehension is thus the generic term for the "recognition" of an actuality by another where "recognition" does not necessarily involve conscious awareness of anything, but merely behavior in terms of it. A body falling according to the received gravitational formula prehends the body towards which it is falling in the sense that the act is performed partly in terms of that body. Most prehension is of course not conscious; for consciousness is restricted to a few higher organisms, but prehension is a universally illustrated category of being (Cf. *Process and Reality*, pp. 81-2).

Dr. Weiss, in setting out the vectoral theory of the individual, has followed Whitehead in insisting that in order to be related to something (i.e. to prehend it), it is necessary in some sense to be where that to which one is related is. Dr. Weiss points out however that Whitehead, in insisting upon the atomicity of the actuality, has fallen into his own trap, and in fact committed a variant of the "fallacy of simple location" the fallacy of supposing that beings are confined altogether in a single locality, but are yet related to other beings— Cf. *Reality*, pp. 208-9, "Though Whitehead has pressed home the point that it is a fallacy of 'simple location' to suppose that there are entities which occupy places in space or time and do not essentially refer to other regions, he has not acknowledged the fundamental fallacy of essential completeness of which his own was a specialized instance. He expresses the fallacy of simple location as having a temporal as well as a spatial application; yet he does not maintain that no things can be viewed as merely present. Instead he takes each thing to be a momentary being, containing *within itself* a reference to an external past and an expectation regarding an external future. In view of this interpretation of time, it seems that he understands the rejection of the fallacy of simple location to entail merely the supposition that every spatio-temporal entity has an internal reference to distant regions. But if a thing is in a single moment of time and merely inwardly points beyond that moment it will vanish, as so pointing, with the passage of its moment. Pointing does not enable an object to persist . . ."

18. Cf. *Reality*, pp. 228-9.

19. Cf. Charles Hartshorne, *Beyond Humanism*, Chicago, 1937, pp. 129, 136.

20. Cf. *Reality*, p. 215.

21. *Reality*, p. 242.

22. Cf. above p. 8.

23. There are no indivisible entities that are not substantial individuals. For an indivisible is that which by definition is without real components, and therefore, so far as its existence depends upon itself, is self-constitutive. But only substantial beings can be self-constitutive in any sense. In connection with this whole discussion cf. Charles Hartshorne's attempt at a panpsychistic explanation of the compound individual in his "The Compound Individual," *Philosophical Essays for Alfred North Whitehead*, New York; Longmans, Green and Co., 1936, pp. 193-220.

24. Cf. *Reality*, p. 192.

25. We are following Whitehead, in extending the meaning of "society" to include certain inorganic aggregates. Cf. *Process and Reality*, pp. 50-1. Dr. Weiss does not distinguish between "wholes" in general, and "societies."

26. That there are divisible individuals is evident; I remain myself even when I lose a leg. To deny this proposition is to take some such attitude as Whitehead's. But Whitehead does not show that it is necessary that individuals be indivisible; he fails, as we have pointed out, to find an intelligible notion of substantial change, and is apparently so discouraged that he builds his cosmology out of a society of newer and richer types of atoms, yet atoms nevertheless. We must therefore try again, and acknowledge that there are divisibles, refusing to abandon a proposition whose truth we imply in every one of our daily acts. It is interesting that Whitehead himself insists that a class can never be used as a substitute for an individual. So he writes (*Process and Reality*, p. 348) "The prohibition of sham diversities of status sweeps away the 'class theory' of particular substances, which was waveringly suggested by Locke (II, XXIII, 1), was more emphatically endorsed by Hume (*Treatise* Part I, Section 6) and has been adopted by Hume's followers. For the essence of a class is that it assigns no diversity of function to the members of its extension. The members of a class are diverse members in virtue of mere logical disjunction. The 'class,' thus appealed to is a mere multiplicity. But in the prevalent discussion of classes, there are illegitimate transitions to the notions of a 'nexus' and of a 'proposition.' The appeal to a class to perform the services of a proper entity is exactly analogous to an appeal to an imaginary terrier to kill a real rat."

27. Cf. *Reality*, p. 200.

28. Cf. *Reality*, Book I, Chapter IV.

29. *Process and Reality*, Part III.

30. *Process and Reality*, p. 337.

31. It is furnished in *Reality*, pp. 17-71.

32. The principal advantage is that we are able more easily to compare the results of our discussions with that of its predecessors.

33. *Phaedo*, 86. Cf. Aristotle, *De Anima*, 407b27-408a34.

34. *Phaedo*, 105-107.

35. Cf. also Aristotle, *De Anima*, II, i, ii.

36. *Process and Realities*, pp. 43-4, 71.

37. *Process and Reality*, Part II, Chapter III, Sections vii-ix.

38. "But there may be other nexus included in a structured society which, excepting the general systematic characteristics of the external environment, present no features capable of genetically sustaining themselves apart from the special environment provided by that structured society. It is misleading, therefore, to term such a nexus a 'society' when it is being considered in abstraction it can be assigned no 'social' features. Recurring to the example of a living cell, it will be argued that the occasions [i.e. actualities] composing the 'empty' space within the cell exhibit special features which analogous occasions outside the cell are devoid of. Thus the nexus, which is the empty space within a living cell, is called a 'subordinate nexus,' but not a subordinate society." *Ibid.*, pp. 151-2.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 156.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 161.

41. Its actuality unlike that of a society is the actuality of an individual, not a subordinate one. This is the case because, unlike the space of a society, it possesses the boundaries of the beings in which it terminates, and has a virtual region of its own.

42. The arising of an individual out of the complementary intensities of other individuals can properly be called a creation, and takes no time. It takes time for the coalescence, but not for the transmutation of the coalescing intensities into a new individual with its own inwardness.

43. There may, after all, actually be no vital organs. They may all be

dispensable. But if some are vital, it is because they contribute sufficient irreplaceable intensity to make them indispensable.

44. In terms of this theory, we may suppose that the brain supplies the intensity necessary to enable a being to think. Destroy it in part, and the intensity which it supplies is apparently so reduced as to make proper mental activity impossible.

45. Cf. C. A. Strong, *Why The Mind Has a Body*, New York, 1903.

46. If an indivisible were to have more intensity than the minimum necessary to be an actuality, it could lose some intensity, and still survive. But if it could lose intensity and survive, it would be divisible.

47. For Plato's insistence that the king must look after his subjects in order to be most a king, cf. *Republic* 342, *Statesman* 275-6.

48. "I admit the appearance of inconsistency in what I am saying [that a philosopher's aim is to separate the soul from the body, but that he must not commit suicide]; but there may not be any real inconsistency after all. There is a doctrine whispered in secret that man is a prisoner who has no right to open the door and run away; this is a great mystery which I do not quite understand. Yet I too believe that the gods are our guardians, and that we men are a possession of theirs." *Phaedo* 62.

49. *Process and Reality*, p. 160.

50. *Phaedo*, 105-6.

51. Cf. *Physics*, IV, i-iv.

52. *Reality*, p. 201.

53. *Ibid.*, p. 195.

54. *Metaphysics* 985b18-19.

55. Cf. *Physics*, IV, i, ii.

56. Cf. above pp. 98-9, and Descartes, *Meditation III*, where he writes, "For the whole time of my life may be divided into an infinity of parts, each of which is in no way dependent on any other; and, accordingly, because I was in existence a short time ago, it does not follow that I must now exist, unless in this moment some cause create me anew as it were, that is, conserve me." Tr: Veitch.

PHILO: FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY  
IN JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM. By Harry  
Austryn Wolfson. Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University  
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Reviewed by Emil L. Fackenheim.

## I.

Scholars have come to expect from any study written by Professor Wolfson a definite contribution to the field with which it deals. But for three reasons a comprehensive work from his pen on Philo is bound to be of special importance.

(i) Recent research has neglected Philo's *philosophy*. Philo is an enigma to scholars, not primarily because his ideas grow from the "Hellenistic mixing bowl of Alexandria,"<sup>1</sup> nor even because of the difficult literary form of his writings, but because of the ambiguity of his position *as a whole*.<sup>2</sup> Is he a philosopher, a mystic, a Pharisee? Where does the real Philo speak, and what is a *Nebenstroemung*?<sup>3</sup> In answer to these questions, most recent scholars hold either that his philosophy is not the most important part in Philo, or at least that the safest approach to him lies in non-philosophic material. In any case, Philo's philosophy has been neglected, and thus Wolfson's work fills a real gap: for whatever the merit of these views, Philo is a philosopher as well, and one who even before the present study was known to have exerted great influence on subsequent philosophy.

(ii) The understanding of Philo as a philosopher requires most exacting qualifications. How many scholars are there who combine a real knowledge of Greek with that of Jewish (in-

1. E. Goodenough, *An Introduction to Philo Judaeus*, New Haven 1940, p. 11.

2. Cf. for the position of Philonic research, Goodenough, *op.cit.*, and R. Marcus, "Recent Literature on Philo" (1924-1934), *Jewish Studies in Memory of George Alexander Kohut*, New York 1935, pp. 492 ff.

3. An expression of W. Voelker. Cf. Goodenough's criticism, *op. cit.* pp. 16 ff.

cluding Rabbinic!) thought, and have, besides, a more than superficial grasp of mediaeval philosophy,—the philosophy which, according to Wolfson, is founded by Philo? Wolfson is one of the very few scholars of our generation combining these so different qualifications, and possessing in addition the most important requirement of all: the ability and patience to trace ideas back to their sources, with a mind sensitive to their finest nuances, and free from preconceived notions as to the actual course of the development of philosophy,—a mind capable of giving strong resistance to the temptation of premature interpretation which so often reads into the text what is not in it.

(iii) The third reason for the importance of this book lies in its comprehensiveness. We shall have to ask in a moment whether Wolfson's fundamental approach to Philo is sound, and whether its soundness is not seriously limited by the fact that Philo's "systematic" philosophy is not identical with his thought as a whole and cannot be fully understood in separation from the latter. But even if the soundness of Wolfson's approach is in this way limited, and even if his method has serious shortcomings otherwise, a comprehensive study of Philo's philosophy such as this is an important, more, a necessary contribution toward the full understanding of the whole Philo. For that herculean task, if it will ever be accomplished, can be accomplished only after all "blocks of Philonic material"<sup>4</sup> have been studied separately. That such separate studies are not definite,—in the absence of a definite interpretation of the whole Philo,—, is perhaps inevitable.

We must now ask and critically appraise what it is that Wolfson is trying to do. Not until we have appraised his fundamental method are we in the position to review some of the results to which it leads. Wolfson's general thesis is that Philo is not only a philosopher, but a great philosopher (I 97 ff.), i.e., that there is philosophic unity in his ideas, and that this unity is creative and novel. The novelty (and greatness) lies, according to Wolfson, in the fact that Philo is the first to make a radical philosophical attempt to reconcile a religion of revelation with philosophy, and that he consequently poses all the questions,

4. Goodenough, *op. cit.* p. 15.

and anticipates many of the answers, of seventeen subsequent centuries of philosophy,—up to Spinoza who challenges at its roots mediaeval (i.e. Philonic) philosophy. To establish this thesis, Wolfson uses his already well-known “hypothetico-deductive method of text-study”<sup>5</sup> which attempts to “reconstruct the latent processes of . . . reasoning” (I 106). This search into the unknown must start out from certain known bases. These are, in the case of Philo, the questions: “What were the scriptural presuppositions with which he started? What were the corresponding philosophic conceptions with which he matched those scriptural presuppositions?” (*ibid.*) So convinced is Wolfson of the soundness of this method, and of the clarity of direction given to it by these basic questions, that he ventures a “fresh examination of Philo” (I viii) without seeking the support to be obtained from controversy with conflicting Philo-interpretations;<sup>6</sup> he places before us a picture of Philo which is to stand on its own merits.

Wolfson’s earlier book on Spinoza was subject to one basic criticism which showed that its method precluded a full appreciation of the creative aspects in Spinoza’s philosophy *as a whole*.<sup>7</sup> Despite appearances to the contrary,<sup>8</sup> this method has the same

5. I 106, also his *Crescas’ Critique of Aristotle*, Cambridge, Mass. 1929, p. 25.

6. Wolfson is no doubt wise in resisting the temptation to decorate his work with the odd criticism of competing Philo interpretations: as he says, this is “a subject which, if dealt with at all, is to be dealt with elaborately and with all the fullness it deserves” (I vii-viii).

7. Cf. H. F. Hallet (*Philosophy* X (1935) p. 369 ff.), who shows some “instances of the failure of the historico-critical method of exposition,” and G. A. de Laguna (*Philos. Review* 44 (1935) pp. 288 ff.), who criticizes Wolfson’s implicit thesis that the *Ethics* “represents the logical conclusion to which Spinoza was relentlessly driven by internal criticism of traditional mediaeval doctrines.”

8. At first sight, the hypothetico-deductive method, when applied to Philo, appears to be free from the weaknesses that are found in the case of Spinoza; (i) Philo’s thought is not in its own purpose an internally coherent system, with the bridges to the past removed; it frankly evolves in criticism of the past; (ii) the two factors whose interplay gives rise to Philo’s thought (Greek philosophy and Jewish religion) are both finished products of the past and are confronted as such by Philo, whereas in the case of Spinoza one of them (the complex of notions which were to form modern thought) belongs to his own present and to the future, and is therefore as yet undetermined in its potentialities; (iii) To these considerations the fact might be added that while some critics could doubt Wolfson’s ability to follow Spinoza “downstream”—into modern philosophy,—no one can doubt his ability either to “approach” Philo “from upstream”—from Greek and Jewish thought,—or to “follow him downstream”—into mediaeval thought (I 103).—But all these factors alter the situation in degree, but not in kind.

weakness if applied to Philo. Philo, no less than Spinoza, "pours new wine into old bottles," and in his case too the new sometimes "escape(s) the exact analysis of chapter and verse and reveal(s) itself, if at all, in the meaning of the whole."<sup>9</sup> The trouble with the hypothetico-deductive method is that it fetters the creative potential of philosophic ideas to conditions behind them; it makes Philo,—a pious Jew with sincere philosophic aspirations,—*perforce* face the problem of reconciling Scripture with Greek philosophy, and *relentlessly* be driven to certain conclusions. But while most rewarding in detail, are the presuppositions of this method justified in regard to Philo as a whole? Granted that Philo is forced to philosophic reconciliation between Scripture and Greek philosophy, does this involve unambiguous conclusions concerning the ultimate relevance to him of such reconciliations? Is the philosophic system esoteric or exoteric wisdom? Mediaevalists are just discovering new and hitherto almost unsuspected possibilities of relating Scripture to philosophy,<sup>10</sup> possibilities which are beyond the grasp of the hypothetic-deductive method because of its presuppositions. Decidedly this method involves the danger of limiting unduly the inherent potential of any great philosophy, and Wolfson's own "synthetic mediaeval philosopher"<sup>11</sup> exemplifies this danger.

9. De Laguna, *loc. cit.* p. 289.

10. Cf. e.g. L. Strauss, *Philosophie und Gesetz* (Berlin 1935), *passim*.

11. In the final chapter of his book (II 445 ff.) Wolfson "invents" a "synthetic mediaeval philosopher" and attempts to follow "his reasoning as he proceeds to revise Greek philosophy." His purpose is to indicate a future determined by Philonic presuppositions. While it would be unfair to look for flaws in these necessarily broad generalizations, Wolfson's very attempt to make them is indicative of his assumption that mediaeval philosophy (and perhaps all philosophy) is the logical outcome of the dogmas it accepts, and that no other result could logically follow from them. If that were true, mediaeval doctrines could be divided into those which represent these results, and those which differ from them only because of philosophic inadequacy. It would then not be philosophically worthwhile to study mediaeval philosophy,—for the first kind of doctrine could more or less be constructed, whereas the second kind would merely be the result of incompetence. Wolfson actually says (II 459): "Nothing really new happened in the history of European philosophy during that extended period [i.e., the Middle Ages];" but this conclusion is in strange contrast with his own arduous and invaluable labors in the field of mediaeval philosophy!

The schematism of Wolfson's "synthetic mediaeval philosopher" is indicative of the fact that his methodological presuppositions must be sufficiently modified to allow for the possibility of the inherence of unpredictable novelty in philosophic ideas. Otherwise no sufficient justice can be done to the philosopher by his historian. Mediaeval philosophy is not just "occasionally inclined to admit the existence of something coeternal with God," it then being a foregone conclusion that "its eternity does not mean uncreatedness" (II 449);

These reflections reveal, from the outset, certain limitations to the validity of Wolfson's conclusions. Above all, assuming that Wolfson's picture of Philo *the philosopher* stands on its own merits, this picture is not necessarily identical with the correct picture of *the whole Philo*. For the method which uncovers the unknown by assuming the autonomy of the requirements of philosophic reconciliation cannot uncover the ultimate relevance of philosophic reconciliation itself.

Wolfson's method limits the validity of his conclusions even within the limited field of Philo's *philosophy*. In the first place, Philo the philosopher cannot be entirely separated from the whole Philo. In the case of some mediaeval philosophers, the relation which their philosophy has to the rest of their thought (the relation between esoteric and exoteric wisdom) is reflected in the literary character of their writings; different literary forms indicate different levels of truth, meanings are sometimes hidden, contradictions deliberately engaged in.<sup>12</sup> Thus the question is forced upon us: may we assume, in the case of Philo—whose writings are not systematic treatises—that he speaks everywhere at the same level of truth? While recognizing that "to get at the true meaning of his philosophy it is not sufficient to collect related passages" (I 106), Wolfson is yet forced by his method to make the assumption that he may corroborate his "reconstruction" of the "latent processes of thought" by "piecing together"<sup>13</sup> various texts. While as yet in ignorance of the relation between the philosopher Philo and the whole Philo, this pro-

it does not "find . . . some kind of solution . . . without giving up . . . [the] principle [of the unknowability of God]" (*ibid.* Our italics). Philosophic considerations of the utmost seriousness are involved here, and the outcome of their discussion is not merely a confirmation of previously certain dogmas. That God "could have created a different kind of world" (II 450) and is a "free agent who can change the order of nature and perform miracles" (II 451) is very far from uniform opinion; in fact, the battle between Neoplatonic emanation and supernatural creation is one of the decisive battles within mediaeval philosophy itself, leading to creative conclusions on both sides (cf. my article, "The Possibility of the Universe in al-Farabi, Ibn Sina and Maimonides," *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research*, vol. XVI (1947), pp. 39-70).

Wolfson, of course, knows all these facts about mediaeval philosophy very thoroughly,—much more thoroughly than this reviewer. But it would appear that his methodological presuppositions often endanger their serious enough philosophic appreciation.

12. Cf. e.g. L. Strauss, "The Literary Character of the Guide," *Essays on Maimonides*, ed. S. Baron (New York, 1941), *passim*.

13. One of Wolfson's favorite phrases.

cedure may be unavoidable. But the hazards it involves must not be overlooked.<sup>14</sup>

The second limitation to the validity of Wolfson's method is strictly philosophical and would exist even if Philo were a philosopher and nothing else.<sup>15</sup> Fully to understand the philosophy of a great philosopher it is never enough to understand it as a derivation from, or criticism of, the past. In numerous instances, one would have liked to see in this book the question: "How and why did this doctrine come about," supplemented by the question: "What does it entail?" (cf. *infra* Nos. II-IV). It is because Wolfson rarely asks this question that one is often left in doubt as to whether Philo really was a great philosopher or merely, by historical accident, the first of mediaeval philosophers.

There is yet a third limitation to the validity of Wolfson's method, less basic and less important from the viewpoint of the philosopher: looking into Philo's background for explanations, Wolfson often covers ground also covered by the literary or general historian,—arguing by logical compatibility where the others argue by historical probability; and the latter is sometimes more convincing.<sup>16</sup>

With all these limitations, however, Wolfson's method is immensely fertile, especially when handled with his inimitable skill. Few methods could have yielded more massive results. Some of these we must now briefly review.

## II.

Whatever the ultimate relevance to Philo of Greek philosophy and Jewish theology, it is undoubtedly correct to say that, on the one hand, he is not merely "a preacher with a flair for

14. However, it certainly would have been possible, and even imperative, to give methodological consideration to the fact that four of Philo's writings are of a purely philosophical literary character. Are the views put forth in these treatises on the same level of truth as those found in Philo's other writings? This question is not answered but obscured when Philo's views are indiscriminately "pieced together."

15. Cf. *supra* n. 7.

16. For example, Wolfson's explanation of Philo's use of the term "mother" for Wisdom (I 266 ff.) seems highly artificial. Would it not be more plausible to look into Philo's literary (perhaps Egyptian!) background than to attempt a logical construction?—In his controversy with Heinemann concerning the Greek or Jewish origin of Philo's attribution of judicial power to kings, Wolfson's view may be logically tenable, but Heinemann's would seem to be in closer touch with historical realities (II 335 ff., especially n. 102).

philosophy rather than . . . a philosopher" (I 98), and that, on the other hand, "in . . . cases where he interprets Scripture allegorically, the literal meaning of the text is not discarded by him" (I 378). Neither are his Scriptural assertions mere "accommodation to Jewish notions" (I 302) nor is his philosophy a mere facade intended to make Judaism more palatable to the enlightened. If Wolfson's book proves anything, it is that Philo is serious about his philosophy and his Judaism; for it shows Philonic (and mediaeval) philosophy to be the result of their interplay. Though we are throughout the book confronted also with doctrines which are only indirectly, if at all, connected with Scriptural exigencies, Philo's philosophy emerges primarily, and consistently, as a Jewish "correction" of Greek philosophy, and may as such be divided into three parts; (i) the *Moeglichkeitbedingung* of Scripture correcting philosophy,—and, perhaps, vice versa (reason and revelation), (ii) the corrected metaphysics, (iii) the corrected practical philosophy.<sup>17</sup> A mere glance at the table of contents will convince the reader that the problems arising, and treated by Wolfson, remain, by and large, identical throughout mediaeval philosophy.

17. It is in order here briefly to indicate the scope of Wolfson's book. After a long introductory chapter on "Hellenistic Judaism and Philo" two chapters follow which concern themselves with the problem of the relation between reason and revelation. The first of these deals with the subordination of philosophy to Scripture,—with the significance of the allegorical method and the underlying problem of faith and reason; the latter analyses Philo's scriptural presuppositions. Wolfson then proceeds—somewhat abruptly, one feels—to an exhaustive discussion of "God, the World of Ideas and the Logos" after which follow logically chapters on "Creation and the Structure of the World" and "The Immanent Logos, Laws of Nature, Miracles." Proceeding from macrocosm to microcosm, Wolfson then discusses "Souls, Angels, Immortality" and "Free Will." Wolfson then (in the second volume) deals with "Knowledge and Prophecy,"—apparently at this place because these faculties are to be understood within the treatment of the nature of man, his "soul," "immortality" and "free will." Nevertheless, this chapter should not have been separated from the earlier chapters on the "Handmaid of Scripture" and "Scriptural Presuppositions;" these chapters belong together, being all concerned with the fundamental question of the relation between reason and revelation. Wolfson then proceeds to the discussion of God's existence and His essence, treated in separate chapters; the discussion of God's existence resolves itself into proofs for it, that of God's essence into the discussion of the inner reasons for God's simplicity and unknowability. We are left guessing as to why these two chapters are found at this late place in the book, rather than before the chapter on "God, the World of Ideas and the Logos" where they would seem logically to belong. The third part of Wolfson's work concerns itself with chapters on Philo's Ethical and his Political Theory. The work is concluded with a chapter on "What is new in Philo?"

The starting point is necessarily Philo's assertion of two autonomous sources of knowledge,—natural reason and supernatural revelation. This assertion raises at once the question of their compatibility. Philo, as Wolfson shows, answers—an answer destined to become classic—that both are the gift of God, and that therefore there can be no conflict provided reason is properly used and revelation properly interpreted.<sup>18</sup> But what are the criteria of the proper use of reason and the proper interpretation of revelation? Tied up with this question is the other, perhaps most fundamental one: why are two sources of knowledge necessary? Nowhere is Wolfson more successful in arguing Philo's greatness as a philosopher than in reconstructing his answer to this question. Philo is not satisfied with showing the homiletic necessity of the revelation; tackling the question radically, he asserts a principal limitation to the capacity of reason. And since reason itself can recognize this limitation (for it can ask questions which it cannot answer) it can recognize the need for revelation. Wolfson is nowhere more convincing than in showing Philo's "correction" of Plato's theory of knowledge.<sup>19</sup>

But revelation does not make reason superfluous either. For reason discovers the true, underlying meaning of the revelation.

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18. There are altogether three answers, cf. I 141-143.—When Wolfson says that "philosophy was . . . revealed to the Greeks as the Law was to the Jews" (I 143), we must assume him to use the term "revealed" loosely, in the sense that the capacity to attain philosophic truth is a divine gift to all men. He cannot mean that Greek philosophy is, like the Mosaic Law, (i) infallible, (ii) a specific revelation of truths which those unacquainted with it cannot reach by their own effort. Cf. his own contrast between "infallible" revelation and human reason which is "subject to error" (I 155).

19. Wolfson shows decisively that Philo consciously rejects the possibility of the third and highest kind of Platonic knowledge,—the pure knowledge of ideas by διδύμηνος or dialectics, and that he instead makes this knowledge the subject of prophecy (II 9 ff., cf. also the corroboration in the section on the four functions of prophecy, II 11 ff.). The result is that "what to Plato and to other Greek philosophers is to be attained by philosophy is to Philo to be attained by prophecy" (II 22). If Wolfson is correct in his analysis—and there is little doubt that he is—then Philo has indeed succeeded in this fundamental point in establishing one of the classic Judaeo-Christian positions in philosophic form,—probably the first to do so. One is reminded of Kierkegaard's classic formulation (in his *Philosophical Fragments*) of this alternative which Philo seems to have been the first to face: the human teacher (Socrates, the philosopher) can teach the Truth only if it is already potentially in the pupil (διδύμηνος); but if the Truth is not potentially in the pupil (if διδύμηνος and the philosophical anthropology it implies are rejected), then only a divine teacher (the prophet, Christ, God) can give it to him,—a teacher who alone can impart along with actual knowledge the potency for its reception.

In the Middle Ages, "each of . . . (the) three religious philosophies . . . (saw) in their respective Scriptures two meanings, a literal and an underlying one; and the underlying meaning was philosophy." (I 158) This is the basis upon which the mediaeval philosopher is able to modify and often to deepen philosophy by his theology, and at the same time to enrich his religion with philosophic enlightenment. At this point, however, one would have wished Wolfson to search into the profound problems which inevitably arise (cf. *supra* # I). Reason is said to be subordinate to faith (I 151) and Scripture "sets aright" reason: but how is this possible if it is reason which explains the true meaning of Scripture? What is the "*uninterpretable* position of Scripture?" (I 155) While he may regard it as beyond his task to search into questions which Philo seems to have left unanswered, Wolfson appears to be not fully aware of the depth of the problem itself.<sup>20</sup> And it is important to search into this question, even if the only result is that Philo left it unanswered.

### III.

In at least one respect there is no trace of ambiguity in Philo (or Wolfson's treatment of him) concerning the task reason must accomplish for revelation: reason must show that revelation is *possible*. This leads into the realm of the "corrected" metaphysics itself. For if revelation is to be possible, miracles( of which revelation is an instance) must be possible; and miracles can be possible only if the validity of the laws of nature is superseded by the free will of God, i.e., on the acceptance of the Scriptural doctrine of creation. God can suspend the laws of nature. Wolfson excels in showing both the logical connection between these concepts and their detailed treatment at the hands of Philo. Furthermore, he shows that Philo holds these doctrines not merely because they are necessary if revelation is to be possible and Scripture is to be valid, but also because they are philosophic truth: thus the revelation both in its pre-

20. He mentions two rules which Philo lays down as criteria determining which statements of the Pentateuch are to be taken as law (I 131); but he does not emphasize that one of them ("the wording of the statement") derives from the revelation itself, whereas the other ("the importance or reasonableness of the statement") derives from reason.

suppositions and its content, helps realize the true philosophy.<sup>21</sup>

Philo is impelled to his correction of Greek metaphysics not only by the metaphysical requirements of revelation as such, but also by some of its doctrines which he regards as indispensable. As Wolfson shows, he regards individual providence and the immortality of the soul as doomed in a necessitarian metaphysics. He is unable, as a Jew, to accept the Stoic denial of individual providence (II 293): but the doctrine of creation and miracles enables him to superimpose on universal providence by natural law (concerned with the species to the neglect of the individual) individual providence supernaturally exercised by the divine will.<sup>22</sup> The immortality of the soul is but another aspect of the same question: Aristotle is right in saying that nothing created can be immortal; but the soul is created; hence it can be immortal only by a miracle. The insight required by Wolfson to reconstruct these doctrines is exemplified by this remark: "the mere fact that Philo is in agreement with Plato as to the immortality of the soul does not necessarily mean that he must also be in agreement with him as to its indestructibility."<sup>23</sup>

Thus Wolfson shows Philo's Jewish correction of Greek metaphysics to be a well-aimed thrust at one single point in it—its necessitarianism. "God's free will is Philo's universal explana-

21. Wolfson shows clearly that creation is with Philo a true doctrine resting on the evidence of Scripture,—rather than a "religious fiction" (I 298)—, and, moreover, "the greatest proof for the possibility of miracles" (I 299), a possibility which is "an essential part of his philosophic system" (I 122, also I 349 ff.). But he should have gone further here: creation is the condition of the possibility of miracles. (Cf. I 355 n. 33, where Wolfson says that creation is "an argument" for the possibility of miracles to Maimonides who recognizes clearly that it is the condition of their possibility, cf. *More Nebukhim* II 25).—While Wolfson sees well enough the internal connection between God's free will, creation, revelation, miracles and individual providence, one would have wished that he had stated more clearly the specific position of revelation, on the possibility of which depends the validity of the evidence Scripture offers for the other doctrines.—

Wolfson indicates clearly that, in contrast with Stoic doctrine (II 47), Philo insists on supernatural grace as a condition of prophecy; and if the relation between the natural virtues of the prophet and grace are not entirely clear, the reasons for this lie probably in Philo himself; nevertheless Wolfson might have found it possible to avoid statements as ambiguous as II 49: "the brief visitations of the divine prophetic spirit . . . are not always altogether a natural act of necessity, they have an element of divine grace in them." (Our itals.)

22. *Ibid.*: Philo's belief in individual providence is "indirectly implied in his belief in miracles."

23. I 410.—Insights of this kind used to escape earlier scholars to whom Philo and mediaeval philosophers were mere copyists and eclectics.

tion—and to him a satisfactory explanation—for anything that cannot be explained by the natural order of causality." (I 367)

We hope to have given some impression of the lucidity of Wolfson's account. If it leaves the philosophic reader sometimes not wholly satisfied, it is again because of his failure to search into the implications of the Philonic answers or into alternative solutions to his problems (cf. *supra* # I). As mediaeval philosophy illustrates, a religion of revelation is not always regarded as incompatible with philosophic necessitarianism, and mediaeval philosophers do not find it easy to evade the latter;<sup>24</sup> and the definition of God's free will is fraught with problems not necessarily answered in one way because of the acceptance of Scriptural religion.<sup>25</sup> Perhaps it is too much to ask even of a man of Wolfson's scholarship to elicit more from Philo than he does. But his account makes the reader at times suspect that Philo raises fateful questions to which he—and Wolfson!—give far too easy answers.

Wolfson's account of Philo's metaphysics does not exhaust itself in those doctrines which are directly involved in his Jewish correction of Greek thought. Among other doctrines dis-

24. (i) The most prominent mediaeval attempt to combine Greek necessitarianism with a religion of revelation is tied up with the distinction between esoteric and exoteric truth (cf. especially the Arabians). Philo too distinguishes between an esoteric and an exoteric meaning of the Law: he could therefore have accepted Greek necessitarianism.

(ii) Greek necessitarianism is not as easily evaded as one might gather from Wolfson. He quotes, in support of Philonic creation against necessary causation, the statement: "Not in proportion to the greatest of His bounties does He confer benefits—for these are without end or limit—but in proportion to the capacities of the recipients" (*Opif.* 6, 23, quot. I 313). But this statement does not contradict, but agree with, the argument for necessary emanation: the Infinite One produces necessarily certain finite emanations because these constitute the limits of the capacity of the recipients, and God, by His nature, must create the best possible—which may be gathered from Genesis as much as from the *Timaeus*. (Cf. for this argument for the emanation theory, e.g., al-Farabi, *Der Musterstaat*, ed. F. Dieterici, Leiden 1895, p. 17, M. Horten, *Die Metaphysik Avicennas*, Halle 1907, 497.) In other words, Wolfson quotes in support of creation passages which, if analysed in their implications, merely set the problem. (Cf. also the profound ambiguity in Philo's statement: "He guides all things in what direction He pleases as law and right demand, standing in need of no one besides: for all things are possible to God" (*Opif.* 14, 46, quot. I 355, our italics).—If it be said, in reply to our criticism, that Philo himself took his arguments to be a sufficient refutation of necessitarianism, we must rejoin that it would have been important to reveal his philosophic limitations in this matter.

25. It would seem that only a radical supernaturalism can escape a doctrine in which God's actions are determined by the perfection of His own nature (His "goodness"), a conclusion which, as we have said (n. 24) may be derived from Genesis as fully as from the *Timaeus*.

cussed we should mention his excellent treatment of the Logos and of the doctrine of the unknowability and simplicity of God. Generally speaking, Wolfson's greatest strength lies in showing precisely and learnedly the slow evolution of concepts;<sup>26</sup> but not infrequently he is weak in the analysis of their wider philosophic significance. For example, he seems to this reviewer to reject the emanation theory of ideas on insufficient grounds,<sup>27</sup> and to leave ambiguous the inner reasons for the simplicity and unknowability of God.<sup>28</sup>

26. Good examples of Wolfson's ingenuity in tracing the evolution of philosophic concepts are the doctrine of philosophy as handmaid of theology (I 145 ff.), the instrumentality of the Logos (I 261 ff.) and the properties of God (II 126 ff.).

27. The real question in his argument with Goodenough (I 237) is not whether expressions such as "source" and "from these two powers others grow out" are "figurative terms." Granted that they express "the logical relations of whole to part or the prior to the posterior," the question still remains as to the metaphysical relevance of these logical relations. And this is a question of doctrine, not of terminology. The example of Plotinus is enough to indicate that there are no sufficient grounds to reject the emanation theory of the ideas decisively until this question is answered.

28. Wolfson shows very clearly that "no philosopher before Philo is known to have stated that God, in His essence, is unknowable and indescribable" (II 150) and that therefore Philo is the first to make that assertion (cf. whole of ch. XI). He also shows that to Philo God becomes simple not only in the respects involved in His incorporeality (II 149), but also in the sense of not allowing the distinction between genus and species. But what are the inner reasons of this development? Is God's simplicity and unknowability *underivable* from the Greek notions (as he seems to mean on II 149 ff.), or did the Greeks merely *happen* to fail to derive these conceptions (as one might gather from II 154)? Do the Biblical passages concerning God's ineffability introduce a non-philosophic element into Philo's thought, or do they merely make him see what philosophy itself implies? The example of certain mediaeval philosophers (e.g. Crescas in his criticism of Maimonides) shows that Scripture may be said to require God's knowability as much as His unknowability,—which makes the former alternative unconvincing. As for the second alternative (that Greek philosophy itself implies what Philo, with the help of Scripture, makes explicit), it would seem to be refuted by Wolfson's account, in the sense that philosophy *as it was to the Greeks* does not involve God's unknowability and simplicity; but it is different when we consider philosophy *in its reconstructed mediaeval sense*. Here it is highly important that there are two possible forms of reconstruction harboring this implication: (i) the creation doctrine which, by its radical division between creator and creation, restricts the objects of possible knowledge to the created world. Wolfson sees this connection, quoting Philo: "for we have in us no organ by which we can envisage . . . (Him), neither in sense . . . nor yet in mind" (*Mus.* 2, 7, quot. II 119, cf. *supra* n. 19) but he does not say clearly enough that this implication of Philo's own revision of Greek philosophy is at least as potent a factor in the emergence of the doctrine of the unknowability and simplicity of God as the influence of certain Scriptural passages. (ii) But there is another principle of mediaeval revision of Greek philosophy which involves the same doctrine concerning God's nature: the *unio mystica* of Neoplatonism, and it is at least possible that Philo may have arrived at it under mystic influence.

## IV.

Wolfson's attempt to interpret Philo's thought as a Jewish correction of Greek philosophy is perhaps most impressive in his practical philosophy. This is not surprising, since the revelation is chiefly Law. But there are deeper reasons lying in Greek philosophy itself. Convincingly, Wolfson starts out with the Greek distinction between "natural" and "enacted" law which leads there to the conclusion that "the 'enacted' laws, even when based on reason, are the work of men and not the work of nature and they differ from the work of nature in that they are not universal, not eternal, and they are not immutable." (II 179) Thus there is an important difference between Philo's criticism of Greek metaphysics and that of Greek ethics and politics: in the case of the former, he must adduce principles from outside to show its limitations; in the case of the latter, he can start his criticism from within,—from the admitted failure of Greek philosophy to realize enacted laws or to frame actual constitutions which are free from discrepancy with eternal and ideal laws or constitutions. Thus he can start out from the distinction between natural and "enacted" laws and contend that "if it is law in accordance with nature that is sought after, then the philosophers might as well give up their effort to devise such a law by their own reason." (II 180) If there is to be a "particular" or "enacted" law which is perfect and of eternal validity, this must be supernaturally revealed,—the Mosaic law (II 180 ff.).<sup>29</sup>

The problem of the relation between natural and revealed law is in a sense parallel to that of the relation between reason and revelation,—except that in the case of the former the distinction (natural and enacted law) is already made by Plato and Aristotle themselves, a distinction which implicitly answers the question of the need for a revealed law.<sup>30</sup>

29. Cf. for important details concerning the relation between natural and divine "enacted" law, II 182 ff.

30. The other basic question, concerning the harmony between natural and revealed law, Philo answers in a way exactly parallel to that found in the case of reason and revelation (cf. *supra* # II): "God is thus the true legislator for both nature and men, and the laws of Moses, though enacted laws, are still in the true sense of the term in accordance with nature, inasmuch as God who is their true legislator enacted them in harmony with those laws of nature of which He is also the legislator" (II 190).

Wolfson's account of the body of Philonic ethics is hardly less important than that of its foundation. This reviewer was particularly impressed with Philo's corrections of Greek ethics in his doctrine of faith as an intellectual (II 216 ff.), and of repentance as a practical virtue. Wolfson shows an especially fine understanding of both Greek and Jewish spirit in showing reasons why repentance is a virtue in Jewish, but not in Greek thought. (II 252 ff.). He excels perhaps even more in his treatment of free will in relation to reason and emotion,—a problem in which Greek and Jewish thought are in irreconcilable conflict,—<sup>31</sup> and of the doctrine which asserts virtue to be its own reward,—a doctrine in which Greek and Jewish thought are in basic agreement.<sup>32</sup>

More interesting to the philosopher than any detail of Philo's political theory is his claim that the Mosaic constitution is, *in actual reality*, the ideal constitution which Plato and Aristotle had been looking for but whose actual existence in any state they had denied (II 374 ff., well summarized 427 ff.). The possibility of making such a claim derives, as Wolfson shows, from the reason forcing Plato and Aristotle to make a division in their political thought between the "best" and the "best-possible" political order: no constitution fashioned in any concrete situation could be wholly neutral, detached from the relative situation and the views, capacities and interests of the people in it. The Mosaic Law can be the ideal law precisely because it is revealed. It would seem, however, that the assumption of its revelation alone is not sufficient to bridge the gap between the Greek "best" and "best-possible" constitutions. For granting that there is an ideal law—the Mosaic Law—, it must still be wielded by men who are but human, and applied by them to concrete situations. The Rabbis solved this problem by their assumption, over and above the revealed written Mosaic Law, of an oral Law also revealed to Moses, but unfolding itself, by way of a secondary

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31. Philo is a Jew, not a Greek, when he holds that "this power with which the human mind was endowed to choose or not to choose refers not only to the choice of good, but also to the choice of evil, even though the mind is by its very nature rational, for, as says Philo, there are in our mind 'voluntary inclinations to what is wrong' (I 431 ff.)

32. They agree that reward must not be the motive of the good deed; but they do not agree as to whether there is a reward, cf. II 279 ff.

revelation, throughout the unbroken tradition of Rabbinic interpretation. Wolfson mentions the acceptance of this doctrine on the part of Philo (II 379, also I 194) but not with sufficient stress to indicate its pivotal importance for bridging the gap between written revelation and the contingencies of situation and natural thought. This is another instance in which one would have liked to see Wolfson search more deeply into the implications of a Philonic doctrine.

One cannot close this chapter without at least noticing that Philo's assumption of a divine constitution has direct philosophical implications concerning certain laws which are part of it. Wolfson is able to show not only that Philo departs from Aristotle in granting the right to full citizenship to all who accept the Mosaic Law, but also that this departure is a direct implication of the assumption of a supernaturally revealed constitution.<sup>33</sup> No less important is the radically altered attitude toward foreigners.<sup>34</sup>

## V.

Students of Wolfson's previous works will know, even without detailed examination, that his treatment of Philo's Greek and Jewish background is always thorough. They will equally expect something close to perfection in those brief forecasts of mediaeval developments with which he closes almost every chapter.

Wolfson's treatment of Philo's Greek background deserves praise, though it is possible to take issue with him over a number

33. "Under the man-made constitutions discussed by Aristotle . . . a citizen must have the ability not only to be ruled but also to rule, and it is because of this conception of citizenship that Aristotle demands that certain native-born inhabitants should be excluded from citizenship . . . Under the divinely ordered constitution, however . . . a citizen is he who is willing to be ruled by the Law." (II 354).

34. "The basis of that (i.e. the Jewish) polity is not common descent but rather the common heritage of the Law which was revealed by God to the people of Israel." Hence even Jews "obtain the approval of God not because they are members of the God-loving polity from birth . . . but because they were not false to the nobility of their birth," and proselytes become citizens of full equality "because they have thought fit to make the passage to piety" (*Spec. I* 9, 51, quot. II 356 ff.).

of interpretations.<sup>35</sup> At times, it would seem, Wolfson schematizes the Greek background in his effort to set Philo off against it.<sup>36</sup>

In his knowledge of Judaism (which is wholly adequate for the purpose) his wide acquaintance with Rabbinic literature is especially remarkable. Because of this, he gains many insights almost invariably closed to non-specialists in Rabbinic literature,<sup>37</sup> and he is also able to dispel centuries-old prejudices against Judaism which derive from ignorance of Rabbinic literature.<sup>38</sup> In some instances, his understanding would appear to be inadequate, apparently because of his, in this connection only too natural, failure to see that Rabbinic Judaism cannot be understood in terms of an inadequately formulated philosophic system.<sup>39</sup>

35. Sometimes Wolfson offers interpretations for which evidence is promised in a later volume. One is hardly inclined, for example, to accept his suggestion that Plato's ὑπερουράνιος τόπος (*Phaedrus* 247C) is a "super-celestial void which, according to him . . . surrounded the world" (I 241), but one must suspend final judgment until Wolfson's evidence is available.—It would seem that Philo's phrase "those who maintain that the faculty of reasoning comes in from without, being divine and eternal" ( θύματες αὐτὸν ἐκτοπέσαντες, θεῖον καὶ αἰθίον δύτα. ) (*Opif.* 22, 67) reminds at least as much of Aristotle as of Plato,—as is maintained by Wolfson (I 391 ff.); cf. *De Gen. An.* 736 b 27 ff.: "it remains, then for reason alone to enter from without and to be divine ( λέπεται δὲ τὸν νοῦν μόνον θύματες ἐκτοπέσαντες καὶ αἴστον εἶναι. ), for no bodily activity has any connection with the activity of reason."

36. The statement that there is for Plato and Aristotle no ideal law and that for that reason they despised of an ideal state (II 376) is too sweeping. In the first place, there is a difference between Plato and Aristotle as to the ultimate relevance of law in the ideal state (cf. E. Barker, *The Politics of Aristotle*, Oxford 1946, p. 144 n. CC). In the second place, while it is true that "according to Aristotle . . . laws are . . . relative to constitutions and constitutions are best only relatively to circumstances" (II 380), the constitution of *Politics* VII-VIII is more than relatively best: it is absolutely best in the sense that the circumstances which underlie it are the best possible to man *qua* man. If Aristotle says that only God can provide a political order for infinite numbers of people (VII iv 8), he means no more than that even the ideal law is a law for men (cf. Barker, *op. cit.* p. 291 n. 1),—a condition holding for the Mosaic law as well. Elsewhere Wolfson suggests more clearly that it was the possibility of lifting the laws of actual political reality to the ideally required position of neutrality which Plato and Aristotle despised of, and that it was this difficulty which was solved by the actual reality of a revealed law.

37. Cf. for example his treatment of God's two *middot* (I 223 ff.) and of the two *yetzirim* (inclinations) (II 230 ff., 288 ff.).—It is not clear why Wolfson uses *yetzer r'ad* for "evil inclination," when used in a strictly technical sense, it is almost always *yetzer hara'* (cf. the texts quoted in Eliezer Ben Yehuda, *Thesaurus Totius Hebraeitatis*, vol. IV pp. 2127 ff.).

38. Cf. his treatment of St. Thomas' prejudices against the ethics of the "Scribes and Pharisees" (II 318 ff.),—prejudices which, with less excuse, survive even in our time.

39. The evil and good inclinations can only in a limited sense, if at all, be regarded as the "rabbinic equivalent of what Greek philosophers call emotion

In Wolfson's brief anticipations of mediaeval Arabic, Jewish and Christian philosophy, his whole immense learning comes to the fore, a lesson that is revealed in his, on the whole, excellent choice of examples to illustrate the continuity of Philo's thought throughout the Middle Ages.<sup>40</sup>

## VI.

As is perhaps inevitable in a work of such magnitude, Wolfson's *Philo* is not free from technical inadequacies. His style, while on the whole adequate, is sometimes absurdly involved,<sup>41</sup> and there are grammatical mistakes.<sup>42</sup> The translation of technical terms is not entirely consistent.<sup>43</sup> This reviewer found one inconsistency in the citation of a work referred to<sup>44</sup> and more than a dozen misprints. These technical shortcomings are minor, however, and outweighed by the generally excellent printing job, the very helpful index which accompanies all of Wolfson's books, and the fact that his style, though lacking beauty and sometimes even correctness, is always clear,—which, after all, is the most important thing in a work of this kind.

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and reason" (II 230). In the first place, evil, as Wolfson's own treatment of the Jewish notion of free will indicates (cf. *supra* n. 31), is in rabbinic thought not merely something negative,—the absence of control. In the second place, Rabbinic thought in its profoundest dimension regards the relation between evil and good inclination not as one in which the latter may achieve the complete control or suppression of the former, but as a paradoxical conflict. Cf. *Midr. Gen.* R. 9, 7: man cannot achieve goodness by eliminating the evil inclination; *Mishnah Ber.* IX 5: man must try to love God with both inclinations; *Midr. Num.* R., *Beb'alot'ka* XV 16: only God, in the world to come, can miraculously dissolve the paradox.

40. The biggest question of this reviewer is why no more frequent reference is made to Plotinus. Is it because he is neither Jew, Christian or Muslim? Yet there are numerous points of unexplored similarity between Philo and Plotinus (who did not accept a religion of revelation!)—Other points of criticism are minor: when stating the failure of mediaeval Jewish philosophy to produce a political theory (II 428), he might have mentioned the reason: there was no Jewish state, and political was fused with Messianic thought.

41. Cf. e.g. the passages I 228-229, II 115 11.7-12.

42. Cf. e.g. II 118 11. 17 ff., II 190 11.7 ff., II 199 11.19 ff., II 229 11.10 ff.

43. The term ὅντος ὅν is translated on the same page (II 84) as "Truly Existing" and "Absolutely Existing." "Truly Existing" also stands for τὸ ποδὲ ἀλήθεαν ὅντι. (II 119) which in turn is also rendered by "He who exists in truth" (II 139).

44. Al-Farabi's *Al-siyasat al-Madaniyyah*, referred to by this title II 62, is referred to II 157 by its other title, *Mabadi al-Maujudat*. Only a few specialists will know that both titles refer to the same work.

## VII.

Throughout this article, this reviewer has attempted, along with emphasizing its merits, to expose the weaknesses of Wolfson's *Philo* to the best of his ability. He made this attempt because of his sincere conviction that this book is a landmark not only in Philonic studies, but in the history of philosophy. Such a work requires thorough appraisal, especially in a negative respect,—for its positive achievements will speak for themselves. This reviewer sincerely hopes that his criticisms will not obscure, but serve to emphasize, the fact that Wolfson's *Philo* will be required reading for the Philo student (and not only for him) for many years to come.

*Notes*

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